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LIFE

OF

WILLIAM ETTY, R.A.

BY ALEXANDER GILCHRIST,

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

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"To Faint or Loiter when only a Little Effort!"—ETTY'S MSS.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

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At the British Institution in 1834, the *Hylas* of last year found a purchaser in Mr. Serjeant Thompson; at a hundred and sixty guineas. Which good news he immediately announces as usual, to sympathizing friends: again has 'reason to be thankful to Divine 'Providence that my Pictures, instead of staying on 'my hands, like those of a number of Artists who 'deserve a better fate, are, (all that are finished), 'sold. A good fortune I could never have expected. 'And therefore, I am the more grateful and happy.'

From the Sketch for *Christ Appearing to Mary*, the engraving in the *Sacred Annual* proved so utter a failure, Etty, to vindicate himself, sent the original to the British Institution: where, as before in private, it was loudly praised, as 'brilliant and spirited,' resplendent in colour, and in sentiment poetic. The

Angels sitting in the light themselves diffuse, 'unmixed with the earthly hue of other objects,' was a feature among others, to receive commendation.

Of the remaining works in progress during the latter half of 1833, and earlier part of 1834, few were destined to be completed for the following Academy-Exhibition. An illness,—which in the end sapped his strength for months,—benumbed his hand at the very season, he 'can least of all in the year 'afford to be ill.' A *Portrait* and a *Cardinal*—a title wherewith Etty dubbed more than one male Study,—were his representatives at Somerset House. To this particular *Cardinal*,—portrait 'of a Polish 'Patriot,' asserts my informant,—Etty refers a year later, as 'one of the best "Heads" he has ever painted,' —'or shall.' A private critic of the Picture speaks with emphasis (justly), of 'serene composure of features,' 'senatorial dignity,'—'a brow of thought,' 'dark and intellectual eyes.'

In his invalided state, the Painter achieves a gossiping letter to accompany one of his periodic packages of presents to hospitable York friends: a present of Prints; among others, one 'after my '*Venus Descending* (a picture painted many years 'since), the best engraving after any of my Pictures. 'I have had but few engraved. Most have not done 'me at all justice: least of all, the *Sacred Annual*, 'which is detestable. * * The print of *Lucy Ashton*, 'from Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*, is tolerably 'well.' That 'of *Venus Descending* can't be had for 'money. Many have sought but could not find it.— 'Scarcely to be had even for love.

'I have been scribbling away till I almost forgot 'the malady preying on me: which has taken away 'all my energies of body and mind,—at least, for the 'present. Scarce a fortnight offers itself, to finish 'I know not how much work: full in my sight,— 'staring me in the face. Yet I feel scarce the strength 'of a kitten. A severe cough, sore throat, hoarse- 'ness, low fever, and soreness all over, deprive me 'of all interest and pleasure in my pursuit;'—'and 'if they do not soon leave me, will put out of the 'question the completion of my Pictures. *Mais 'j'espère!* On tiptoe stands the Angel Goddess, 'Hope, looking through darkness and clouds; her 'Brightness wrapt in sunshine!

'To give you some idea how unlike I am what I 'generally am.—The little bit of mill-board that keeps 'down the prints, had to be cut off a larger piece. I 'assure you I looked at the effort with dread. But 'my Betsey, with her usual care and kindness saw' this; 'and did it for me. I trust, however, the worst 'may be past;' and 'that to-morrow's sun may light 'me to labour and better health.'

'Walter' and family were 'here last Sunday.'— I put Walter in his arm-chair. And a pleasant voyage was soon made to the land of Nod: his feet 'on a box; his benevolent hands clasped.' * * 'Behind me, lies a gallant Knight in armour of gold 'and steel,—of great splendour,—a purchase made 'last week; with two others of chain armour, and a 'shield of steel. So that my armoury is growing; 'though I have not strength to wear it.'

His recovery is slow. He has long to endure

the tedium of an imprisonment to his room, and of the (to him) unnatural divorce from his easel;—rejoices, when finding strength to relieve the monotony of forced idleness, by even 'painting a little.' From his sick room he looks forward with longing to Yorkshire scenes, their welcome contrast and promise of renovation: 'already,' (*June 6th*), 'in imagination, 'hears the Minster Organ pealing through its lofty 'aisles, and the sighing of the wind through the trees 'of the New Walk;'—or 'stretch my eyes o'er the 'varied landscape, as it appears from the Bar-Walls.'

After thirteen years of Fame,—counting from the *Cleopatra*,—Etty was still dependent for Daily bread on the Day's work. Prevented from finishing this year's Pictures for the Exhibition, money was in urgent request with him; and he fain to bestir himself in calling in an outstanding debt,—the £100 still due for the *Judgement of Paris* of 1826:—for which he had lately renewed solicitations. In the draft of a letter of this year, I find him assuring Lord Darnley that he has 'no desire to be unnecessarily litigious.'—'But, when the alternative is 'whether I must be unjust to others, or see that 'others are just to me, I cannot hesitate which to 'pursue. * * The sum in question, together 'with another of about the same amount, I have 'not yet received, for a Picture painted a year or two 'before,' (for Sir Thomes Lawrence), 'is a serious 'drawback from the hard-earned remunerations of an Artist. And, when I assure your Lordship, that 'though I have studied and practised my profession 'for eight-and-twenty years, with industry unceasing,

'without having yet had it in my power entirely 'to discharge the Debt incurred by prosecuting 'those studies; and that to these kind friends I 'must be unjust if justice is not done to me:—your 'Lordship will not think my profession a sinecure. 'However, it has delights which I would not ex- 'change for a Academ: though it is the most arduous 'and difficult of pursuits.'

A letter to his brother Walter, dating June 3rd, details further progress.—'I have reason to believe,' he relates, 'that Providence has favoured my ex- 'ertions of the *past week;* powerless and feeble as 'they necessarily are, from my obstinate complaint. 'I began, yesterday week, to cogitate and afterwards 'write a letter to the Lord Darnley.' Wherein, among other things, the Painter had urged, that 'an 'illness of many weeks, which yet almost wholly pre- 'vents his exerting himself in his profession, has 'prevented his completing his usual quota of Pic- 'tures for the Exhibition; and has thrown him back 'consequently, on his own resources.'

'In the afternoon of that day,'—Etty resumes, (*to his Brother*),—'Mr. Vernon looked in, and asked 'the price of *The Cardinal*, now in the Exhibition. 'I told him fifty guineas. He asked the price of '*The Warrior Arming and his Black Slave*, then on 'the easel. "A hundred guineas when the armour 'and subordinate parts were finished." He requested 'me to *finish* it for *him!*' Unfortunately for the public, Mr. Vernon did not retain this masterly study from Nature.

The letter to Lord Darnley results in a call from

the latter. My Lord thinks the Painter 'had re-'ceived the Picture's value by receiving £400.' The Painter begs 'to be of a different opinion:'—'when 'an Artist had studied twenty years, and spent on 'a Picture the best part of a year; and gone into 'considerable expenses with that picture, and taken 'the pains I did with it.'—Nor can he 'undertake 'to point out a channel whereby' it might be disposed of.

'On Thursday,' (*to his Brother still*), 'I procured 'the necessary documents:'—'set off a little after 'twelve, walking slowly up the Haymarket to a 'hosier's shop;'—'replenished myself with a new 'pair' (of gloves). 'In order to go in *cool* and 'collected,' took a chariot:—'handsome as a gen-'tleman's own. Afraid of being a little too early: 'to prevent this, my Jehu caught the wheels of a 'cab.'—'As I drove up, his Lordship was just dis-'mounting. * * I laid before him one by one 'my powerful documents. He paused, again said 'he thought it was not worth five hundred guineas; 'or some one at the Gallery would have bought 'it *at* that price. I told him *that* did not exactly 'follow,—many people had not room for large 'pictures;—put it to his candour whether a man 'having studied twenty years, and of my standing 'in my profession, was not entitled to £400 a year 'for his exertions. He paused again:—*He would 'settle it!*'—Not, however, precisely according to the Painter's anticipations; as a subsequent letter reveals: from York (*July 1st*).—'I concur with you,' —he tells his Brother,—'in the justice and pro-

'priety of resisting' the proposal made: '*as injustice*. 'Yet, knowing how much it would agitate and un-'settle my mind to have it go to Reference,—at a time 'too, when I wish to have my mind easy, and to 'regain my health and strength,—I have made up 'my mind to take the £75 and have done with it.'—'Rather than have any law proceedings, I would 'have lost it altogether.'—'I consider it so much 'money saved from the fire. Take it for the sake 'of peace and quietness!'—If health is fully to be recovered, 'my mind must not be agitated by *re-'ference*, or *referees*:—who want their fees. * * '"Better is a dinner of herbs and peace withal, than 'a stalled ox and strife therewith."—But get the '*cash, and not bills*.'

By the middle of June, Etty had found himself in condition to seek the familiar York scenes, for which he had sighed during convalescence;—and, 'fond of 'being expected,' fixes the day and hour his friends at the Mount may have in readiness the 'cup of friendly 'tea.'—'Am going this morning (*June 15th*) to take 'Jane, Cicely, and my Betsey, to see the Correggios, 'at the National Gallery; which have just been pur-'chased at the expense of twelve hundred guineas.'

On his present, as some subsequent journeys to York, Etty took Lincoln in his way; stopping a day, to compare the architectural beauties of its Cathedral with those of his beloved Minster. The comparison ends, to the Yorkshireman's satisfaction, in favour of the familiar building. It does his 'heart good to see 'the superiority of our own.' It is an item in the faith of Yorkshiremen that their Cathedral is indis-

putably the finest in England,—and in Europe: a unique National Monument. In no other county or city, does so strong a local pride prevail, as to *such* claims. The denizens of most Cathedral towns seem all but ignorant they possess anything memorable in the direction of Art.

The Painter's love for his City's famous Church was a growing passion. No letter from York but reiterates his happy experiences within the august fabric: how he is 'ravished and subdued' to-day; how 'touching' was such and such a part of the Service yesterday; how 'the windows dyed the 'purely beautiful columns with hues the most ex-'quisite.' He 'wanders in the side aisles or nave 'in the week-day, hears the chanting and the swell 'of the Organ rolling through the vaulted roof; and 'thinks of the Olden Time and the noble minds 'who raised this holy structure. Where shall we 'look for such now.'—'How I should like you to see 'the Minster!'—under this or that phase, is his ordinary exclamation to correspondents. 'If any-'thing on Earth is worthy of Him who made us, it 'is *it*.'—And similar raptures.

In the following to Mr. Bodley, from 'the Mount' (*July* 13*th*), this, and another favourite topic,—with him, as with all Historic painters,—the desirableness of public and religious employment of Art, find vehement expression.

He regrets 'the Protestant part of the Church of 'Christ was not sufficiently awake to those (in my 'opinion), important adjuncts,—which might be so at 'least,—the Arts. Who shall say that Architecture

'is of no importance, after coming out of York 'Cathedral? Who shall say, when the Anthem 'swells in tones of glory, that *Music* is not? I *must* 'write an Essay on their importance to Religion.' * * 'I have been to the Minster this morning. 'The Choir looked gloriously, filled from Organ-'Screen to High Altar: on which' (latter) 'was the 'fair white cloth, for the Sacrament, the golden 'dishes, and the crimson velvet; beyond that, the 'beautiful Altar-*Screen*, and the superb East Window, 'glittering in sunshine, gorgeous as a mosiac of 'diamonds, sapphires, rubies.—The doors are open: 'hark! At a distance, the trumpets sound. Open, 'ye Gates! Here come the Judges! arbiters of life 'and death.—To-morrow the Assizes. Now swells 'the Organ: and they come up the Nave. The Civic 'authorities first; and then Gurney, Lyndhurst, and 'their train. They take their station: the service 'commences.' * *

'*Seven o'clock.* I have since writing the above, 'been at Evening Service.'—'When I listened to the 'inspiring sound of the Organ, and looked at the sub-'lime building, above and around, and the glorious 'colours in the painted Saints, Martyrs, and sacred '"*Storia*" in the windows,—chastening in rich and 'solemn hues the light of Heaven,—I felt *three* ad-'ditional arguments for my principle of giving the 'highest moral elevation to the Fine Arts, by enlisting 'them in the cause of our holy religion.

'The Rev. Vernon Harcourt, eldest son of the 'Archbishop,' Canon and Residentiary, 'my great 'opponent in the matter of the Screen, came up to

'me, shook me by the hand,' was 'very friendly and 'affable;'—'asked me what I thought of the finish-'ing of the Organist's Screen of tabernacle work:' restored,—that is *new*—work. 'The pipes are 'bronzed. I told him I thought they would look less 'heavy in flat gold. He thought so too.'

Other opponents of former times are affable and condescending to the now celebrated Painter. 'With 'the Dean and his family' he dined 'last Sunday at 'six': who was 'very pleasant and very polite.' 'Am 'going to an evening party there on Thursday. In-'deed I could go to more parties than I have appetite 'for. * *

'The City will be in some bustle: being the Assizes. 'I am happy to say Crime has not been so rife, as it 'is sometimes. May we go on improving! and each 'Assize have less, until that *great* Assize at which 'the world will grow pale!'

'The Sun is sinking, and shedding his softened 'and golden glories on the landscape,—hay-fields, 'groves, mills, in tranquil beauty.'

His friend's home was, early in this visit, exchanged for one of his own,—also on 'the Mount,'—secured beforehand in contemplation of the lengthened sojourn required for perfect renovation of health.—'You know my love for York,' he had written from London, announcing the step to his friends: '*that's* nothing new. Well! feeling this, 'also, that when I get there, I never know when to 'come away; have often stayed so long, I felt uncom-'fortable, felt I was staying *too* long; with that 'natural love of Independence I always,'—&c., 'not

'impugning in the smallest degree your hospitality, 'which has been every thing that,'—&c.: I have taken 'the little wooden box at the top of the Mount.'—This 'wooden house on the Mount has caused much 'amusement to us all here.'

By *July* 13*th*, he is 'getting a few necessary 'things in;' expects to enter 'next week.'—'Pleasantly 'situate on the top of the Mount, directly opposite 'a Mill which my Father occupied when I was born;' the four-roomed cottage, with its annual rent of 'nine guineas a year, including taxes,' well pleased the Painter. Within a few paces of his Friends,—with whom he still passed much of his time,—he was independent and his own Master; private at his choice, or social.

Installed in his 'country seat,' complacently 'sitting 'after dinner' one fine 'Sunday afternoon' (*July* 27*th*), 'Bishop-Hill bells ringing in the distance, and 'all otherwise still,' he recounts to his Niece, improvements and purchases: purchase of 'such a curious 'old Arm Chair,' for 'thirty shillings;'—'the silk 'that covers it, fit for painting from; a piece of York 'Antiquity; and very easy. It would do for Walter 'on a Sunday afternoon.'—Or, he tells of a friendly feminine hand, which 'has planted some flowers in 'his little garden behind;' reports that 'some currants 'are ripe' in the same little garden, and 'a black-'bird, a thrush, and a robin, were this morning '(*August* 17*th*) picking up a breakfast. We are nicely 'sheltered with trees behind and before; which dance 'in the sunshine, and make chequered sunshine on 'my carpet.'

In this retreat, health and strength were gradually regained; though occasional skirmishes had to be sustained with the enemy:—rheumatic 'swellings of 'the right hand,' 'weakness in the ankles,' &c. But slowly, 'aches and pains are dying a natural death, 'and are all to be buried here.'

The routine relaxations to which, except in York retirement, he so seldom yielded, of 'dinners out' and evening parties, were varied by excursions into the more beautiful portions of the County: excursions, improving 'my knowledge and admiration 'of my dear native County; which I believed beau-'tiful before,' find 'doubly so now.' One day, 'Mr. 'Tuitt, who is here now, takes' him 'to Deighton 'Cottage, a beautiful place on the Selby road; sur-'rounded by a wood on three sides:'—'on a sunny 'lawn, the sheep lying in the shade of trees, like 'a picture of Titian's.' Another, Booth Ferry is visited; on the way, Selby and Howden:—Howden Choir and Chapter-House 'beautiful in ruin'; the 'country we passed through rich, and well-wooded, 'golden with the harvest, laughing in luxuriance.' 'In a ruinous part of Howden' is encountered, he tells his brother Walter (*August 17th*), 'the tomb 'of a Crusader,'—'which I sketched:'—'in chain-'armour, a piece of plate-armour on his knee, like '*my* suit; shield, surcoat, sword, &c., and a Lion 'at his feet.' * * 'The Abbey-Church' of Selby 'is, with all its mutilations, a glorious structure: a 'monastery ere the *Blessed* Reformation, as the Pro-'testants call the Robbery and Spoliation of the 'Church.'

To Mr. Bodley he, in his circumstantial way, narrates the details of further wanderings in the North Riding.

'I know you like travelling: you shall travel with 'me:—in your own arm-chair. I will carry you over 'hill and dale, by yoking to it my Pegasus.

'Before yoking him in good earnest,—to take you 'to the Moors (not of Barbary, but of Yorkshire),— 'I will tell you of a pleasant day I had nearer York: 'only four miles off.

'At Poppleton, a remote country village, on the 'pleasant banks of the Ouse, is one of those old 'country-churches and quiet churchyards, we see 'only in *our* Country. A few trees surround it: the 'silence only broken by the sighing of the breeze. 'In the church is an ancient monument,—black letter 'on brass: beginning and ending with something 'like this,—"How vain all the pleasures of Life!"'

To more distant scenes, a three days' tour was made with his friends, 'in open carriages'; his old friend Mr. Brook, familiar with the country, acting as *cicerone*.—First to Gilling Castle, the residence of the Fairfaxes.—

'We entered a wild and woody part of the Park, a 'perfectly regal approach, through long lines of fine 'old trees wide apart:' a 'green velvet avenue nearly 'a mile long,' on 'rising ground.' 'Arriving on the 'brow of this grand, green avenue,—the Castle a little 'way distant,—we alighted. The family, apprised of 'our coming, very politely received us. We were 'shown a room for which the ancient part of the 'Castle is celebrated: unique. Sitting in it, you

'may fancy yourself living in the time of Henry VII., 'three centuries ago.—The oaken polished floor, the 'painted window, the ancient painting, the inlaid 'wainscoat, the magnificent view all ways,' 'the 'terraced garden, the ancient tower, the' &c. 'They 'gave us luncheon in this very room.' Duncombe Park and its pictures were next seen, romantic Kirkdale explored: 'a most secluded valley, in which 'a very ancient church; far remote from any town. 'The deep silence and solitude,—betwixt high hills 'covered to the summit with woods,—and the rocky 'torrent running through the valley, made it one of 'the most striking of scenes.

'After this, to Kirkby Moor-side,' 'our quarters 'for the night.' 'Walked up to a wooded hill which 'commands the town and the setting sun; read the 'gravestones, peeped into the Church.' * *

'After sleeping well, rose to see a morning bril- 'liant and clear as in France or Italy.'—'A finer, 'never Aurora smiled on.'—'Some of us mounted 'the beautiful hill. The air was clear and blue to 'intensity; 'the prospect,'—&c.

'Set off for the village of Lastingham, the birth- 'place of Jackson, the Painter:'—'by a route 'Mr. Brook had found by chance.'—'Through a 'wild and almost Alpine valley he took us; now 'toiling up a hill, then crossing the brook. We at 'last arrived at this pretty village, in a Valley shel- 'tered from the South by high and wooded hills, and 'on the North by a wild and desolate Moor. Just 'such a spot as a poet would like to be born at: 'remote, secluded peaceful as an Alpine solitude.

'The crystal mountain-stream ran rippling o'er 'the gravel.—How I longed to drink!

'The Church is celebrated: its antiquity, its 'beauty, its crypt, its situation.'—'Jackson has 'taken great pains with it; presented a picture, lit 'it beautifully with gold-coloured glass. You do 'not see where the light comes from: and the effect 'is magical.'—'A tablet gratefully records these, his 'meritorious exertions.

'The religious effect of light thrown on the pic-'ture,—*Christ in the Garden of Olives*,—the touch-'ing tribute of regard to the memory of one whom 'I had esteemed as a countryman, an Artist, a 'friend, and the recollection that he was now no 'more, overcame me to tears.

'I visited his aged mother. She was almost 'double when I went in. When I said I was the 'friend of her son, she raised herself up, said she 'had heard her son talk of me; was delighted:—and 'when we went away, gave me her blessing with a 'fervour truly religious.'

'We walked up the hill; gathered some small wild 'strawberries, and bade adieu to the birth-place of 'poor Jackson.'

To Helmesley for the night, with its Castle, a 'wildly picturesque ruin:' by another route 'over the 'Moors.—Ruts half a yard deep, and hills so steep 'we were obliged to walk.'

The next day, Rivaulx Abbey rouses abundant raptures. 'The astonishing dioramic View of a rich 'and magnificent valley, how shall I describe? I 'never in Italy or Switzerland saw a finer. Hill after

'hill, valley after valley, clothed with richest woods 'in all the varieties of light and shade, and all forms 'of loveliness and peace, met our delighted view:'—standing on 'the velvet lawn' of the terrace of Duncombe Park. 'Immediately beneath us, a beau-'tiful Picture,—the Abbey itself, shining in the 'morning; the mountain-stream of the Rye here 'sparkling in the sun, there rushing over rocks, or 'losing itself in the romantic solitude of the Vale 'of Rivaulx. We descended a precipitous path 'through the woods' to the Abbey. 'The desolation 'in which it stands;—the wild grass and the nettles 'growing over the high altar, where the pealing 'anthem had swelled the notes of praise;—the stones 'of the fallen arch forming hillocks in the aisles, 'grown over with turf and moss,—the shelter of 'asps;—its pinnacles, the resort of rooks and jack-'daws:—all, perhaps, draws more deeply on our sym-'pathies than when there is more appearance of care, 'and more of the trimness of landscape gardening. 'Deep and solemn the impression.' Had Etty 'the wealth of Lord Faversham,' he would restore this glorious remain,'—a puerile and destructive consummation devoutly to be deprecated,—and 'the 'Anthem of Praise should echo along its lofty aisles 'once more!'

One of his fair companions, Miss ——, 'gathering 'wild flowers and moss among the ruins, had nearly 'met the fate of Eurydice. For she was in the 'immediate neighbourhood of two Asps coiled toge-'ther:' who, however, 'on being disturbed, darted 'into the moss' innocuously, 'and disappeared.'

* * 'Drove along the beautiful Vale of Rye, and 'ascended the Hambleton Hills or Moors:' there to encounter 'a sensible variation in the climate,' and an 'extensive bird's-eye view;'—'men and cattle im-'mediately beneath,' showing 'like specks or flies.'—After a call at 'the well-known inn where the Racers 'of Yorkshire are trained, we descended, through a 'ravine of rocks and trees worthy of Salvator:' the ravine 'gradually developing scenes of great beauty 'and wildness.—Till at last, a rich vale discovered in 'its bosom the remains of Byland Abbey, a stream 'running by its side:—sheltered from the North by 'the hills,' with their 'variety of fascinating prospects,' —of other 'hills, woods, and streams.' The 'pretty 'village of Coxwold' is not neglected: 'rising on the 'side of a hill; a noble village-tree in its centre; a 'crystal fountain at its entrance; and crowned by 'its fine Church and Churchyard. On the right, the 'old Parsonage-house' once 'occupied by Lawrence 'Sterne.' Deserted Newbrough next. 'A single house-'keeper showed us through the solitary rooms,—where 'Pictures and antique volumes of rarity are mouldering 'into dust;'—showed also 'the saddle and pistols of 'Cromwell,' one of whose daughters 'married into the 'Family.' Two large dogs barked to their own echo in 'the court-yard, and all seemed desolate.' * * 'Dark-'ness and the moon again brought us to old Ebor.'

At Etty's instance, his friend Sydney Taylor paid York a visit, during the Painter's present stay: affording the latter the pleasure of introducing his equally enthusiastic friend to the 'Antiquities and 'local lions.'

'Sydney Taylor,' Etty recounts, (*September 7th, to his Niece*), 'repeats fine pieces of poetry, and delights 'us all. He is in the Seventh Heaven of rapture with 'the Minster; says, it far exceeds his expectation. 'He and Mrs. Taylor are delighted with York 'generally.'

The first morning, 'I took them over North-street 'Walls, and over the Ferry of Lendal; giving them 'a fine outward and distant view' of the Cathedral. The 'South entrance reached, 'I made him peep through 'the little door, at the dim religious light from the 'Five Sister Windows.'—'The Organ began at that 'moment, and then the voices pealing through 'the aisles in solemn echo.'—'We went as far as 'the Screen,'—'which *we* saved,' (adds Etty elsewhere). 'I showed *that*, then turned him towards 'the West Window and Nave.'—With St. Mary's Ruins, and the Roman 'Multangular Tower,' he 'was delighted to rapture. I took them to the '"New Walk;" made them drink of the Holy 'Well; showed them the Baths. Crossing the ferry, 'ascended Skeldergate and Micklegate Walls.' 'I 'thought we should not have got Mr. Taylor home in 'time for dinner. He was a mile almost behind, 'running into all the entrances and recesses, fancying 'he was defeating an attacking army, sending hero 'after hero tumbling into the trench below. How-'ever, at last, we got him down.'

In their genial company, added to that of his former associates, the Painter engaged in '*another* 'tour' of three days: to Byland, Rivaulx, again, also

Fountains Abbey, Ripon, Knaresboro', &c. 'Our en-'joyment was much increased by the great zest Mr. 'and Mrs. Taylor have for these things.'

'You may see by the *Yorkshire Gazette*,' mentions Etty to his brother Walter, 'I have been throwing 'another stone at the Destructives,' a letter signed *Conservative*; also writing personally to the Dean: who, 'you will be sorry to hear, can't be quiet. He 'wants to pull down the Ancient Library, now used 'as a Will Office, and some say, the Vestry too, on 'the other side. If so, I should say, he ought to be 'sent to Bedlam.' This 'long and strong,' (private) letter, is sent as 'a flag of Truce.'—'If he does 'not hear reason, we must bring our heavy artillery 'to bear.'

York possessed a Dean who emulated its Corporation in zeal for 'Improvement.' Repeated occasion is he giving the local Newspapers,—even after his defeat in the matter of the Screen,—for complacent historical notices like the following:—'The Reve-'rend Dean,' (*September* 1*st*, 1832), 'has deter-'mined, with his *usual activity*, to pull down those 'unsightly buildings' (fair Gothic ones), 'on each side 'of the south door of the Cathedral,—the Depository 'for Wills, and the building used as the Spiritual 'Court:—and thus display the beauty of our matchless 'Cathedral to much greater advantage.' That particular determination aroused Etty's resistance, and was never carried into execution. Later, however,—during the interval between the two Minster Fires,—the enterprising Dean, bent on opening out 'Views' of the Cathedral,—on stripping it as bare as might be,

that is, of those subsidiary objects the times *of* vitality in Art had grouped around it,—*did* succeed in pulling down St. Peter's Prison, an ancient and interesting cathedral Gateway, together with all the Old Houses encircling the western end of the Minster; and lowered the surrounding ground: scrupling not at sacrilege,—at removing the contents of the Cathedral Burying-ground to another. He purposed, but did not realize 'a crescent' round the East end: to compass which, great pullings-down, were to have taken place. At the North, the old Deanery *had* been removed before the first Fire, and the present Tea-garden-Gothic erection put up.

At all which alterations, and at the innovating Dean himself, though on what is called visiting terms with him, the Painter looked askance. At the demolition of the old houses,—which all York besides applauded as a 'real improvement,' thinking them so 'ugly and unsightly,' and 'our Cathedral so blocked 'up,'—he was specially indignant; sticking not to style *it* sacrilege too. He pointed out, moreover, one unremembered result of alienating the Minster property by pulling down houses belonging to the Chapter, and distributing the ground:—that less remained for the future support of the building. In his Lecture of 1838, he refers, in what York must have thought singular terms, to the dubious advantage—of 'knocking down a score of old houses, with 'their innocent and picturesque old gable-ends; 'whose only fault is, they have too much character 'and picturesque effect to be allowed to remain. 'Like the contrast and foil of an old duenna to a

'celebrated Beauty: so were they to the Minster. By 'their presence, she seemed to gain an accession of 'beauty and majesty. I must say, I deeply regret 'the system of destruction going on, and confess I 'can hardly keep my temper when on some new bore 'being about to be perpetrated, some new pulling-'down commenced, people appeal to me and say: '"Don't you think we are improving York very much?" 'While one stone remains on another of old York, I 'shall love her. But when such awful slices are 'carved out of her, I feel as Churchill said he felt 'when he had to alter his poems: "It is like cutting 'away my own flesh!"'

To the 'innocent and picturesque old gable-ends,' have since succeeded,—at due remove from the Cathedral, but near enough to disfigure it,—a bran-new Crescent of sorry little tenements in sickly-looking, white brick: of which the paltry and sordid elevation has certainly the advantage of being as unlike as possible to the ancient Petergate. 'They alter things, 'but don't mend them,' might well be a familiar expression on Etty's lips. Everything connected with the identity of York *he* valued. And with such feelings, he had frequent cause to lament that few Antiquarians (in feeling), were left;—few who cared about the old things, or the old times:—so that 'York was becoming a new place, unlike itself.' He would often intercede,—fruitlessly in general,—with tradesmen known to him, when, as private occupiers, threatening some ancient or characteristic feature of York-streets: Now, it would be an old-fashioned, square-sided bow-window,—as projecting into the

street, a more picturesque feature than a flat reliefless surface. Another time, a large grocer, Alderman of York Corporation, who inhabited an antique house in Stonegate, its front ornamented with grotesque and curious figures, and carved beams, of about the era of Henry VII., finding his premises 'unsuited to the 'modern ideas of trade and of convenience,' *refronted* them: which act would not add an inch to his available space. It was reserved for the last twenty years to make the discovery that a front of plate glass was 'essential to trade.' Etty, a customer chiefly on account of the pleasure he took in the ancient place, had remonstrated in vain against the intended Vandalism; and from the day of its consummation, ceased to be a customer of his old acquaintance the Alderman.

Once, when Etty was on a visit to York, Mr. Wellbeloved,—an Antiquarian of the old school, between whom and Etty a common love of York Antiquities was a bond of union,—was making a map of the religious state of York before the Reformation:—the Abbeys, Hospitals, &c. 'Willingly,' exclaimed Etty, 'would I give up five years of my life to have 'lived *one* before the Reformation, and have seen 'York as it was then.'

Besides occasional skirmishes (on Paper) with the Destructives,—Etty has also during this long Vacation, in the intervals between excursions, been 'painting a good deal.'—Has begun 'two small fancy 'Pictures on the two spare canvases he brought;' has advanced the *Bridge of Sighs* and another picture. 'Also, I have been painting,' he continues,

(*October* 19*th*), 'a small Head of one of the Dean's 'sons, in a hunting picture of Dogs and Horses 'painted by himself;'—'have painted two sketches 'in oils of two Clergymen of the Minster, Mr. 'Richardson, one of the oldest props, and Mr. 'Taylor; a recollection of an effect in the 'Cloisters of Fountains Abbey; a *Head* of a Boy, 'and some studies from Nature for Pictures *in petto*.' His little room in the 'Wood House' had become a productive Studio.

Among the Studies from Nature, must number one,—exhibited the following year at the Academy,—from a young lady, then in the first bloom of youth, whose beauty had taken his eye and fancy captive, in some York perambulation. The permission of her father, a respectable York citizen, obtained,—Etty offering to present the lady with the portrait after some little use of it;—the study was made *con amore:* a lovely rendering of the fulness of youth and vivacity,—of sparkling cheeks, eyes, gems, and dress, of pearl-like flesh. The beautiful young girl,—playful and mischievous,—was not a little amused at the strange, uncouth-looking Painter; and delighted to tease him. All which, he took in good part; supplying her with additional entertainment by his Painter's enthusiasm and 'romantic ways' of behaving: handing the needful refreshment of wine and cake on his knees,—'as was fit in offer-'ing nectar to a goddess;'—and other 'poetic' extravagances. In one of the intervals of sitting, her head negligently averted, this new phase of a fascinating subject was seized as the *motive* of a second

and smaller study, (in profile), which the Painter retained:—of similar deep-toned brilliancy, in spirit and execution.

This face, like others of the Painter's numerous *beau-idéals,* was often introduced,—often unconsciously,—in his important works. When he had once painted such a Study,—and thus impressed the idea of the admired face on his mind,—he seldom cared to consult it again; painted from that idea. In London, Etty frequently introduced himself to the family of some unknown beauty whom he had met in the streets; presenting her with her portrait in return for leave of study. One of these girls, originally in a respectable situation, came, after the lapse of years, to be the inmate of a workhouse. As a means of befriending both her and a Dealer with whom he was intimate, Etty acquainted the latter of the study in her possession. Who accordingly bought it, for £5, disposing of it at a moderate advance; and has since rebought and resold it, again and again, at an ever-increasing premium: until it reached the market-price of £100.

'Time in York,' exclaims the Painter, 'flies like a 'dream.' * * 'I have had a great deal of real enjoy-'ment, and am happy to say, have been the means of 'others also enjoying.'—'A little lingering of weak-'ness in my ankles and hands' remains: 'but no-'thing to what it was.'

October 27th, he reports to Mr. Bodley another pleasure-trip with Mr. Brook and his friends, 'on 'Monday last,'—to Kirkham again, 'approaching it 'by' another route: 'on high land. The river Derwent

'wound serpentinely in the valley beneath, enlivening 'scenes of great beauty, till the ride was finished by 'the sweet Valley of Kirkham with the Abbey in its 'bosom.' * *

'Delighted to hear of your taking up your quar-'ters at the old York Hotel:'—a pseudonym for his Buckingham Street Home. 'We shall always en-'deavour, by civil treatment and reasonable charges, 'to keep our old and respected customers. In this 'age of competition and cheapness we shall rely 'more on those qualities which have given our old 'establishment its character, than by any affected 'refinement to captivate new-comers.'—One of the well-meant, if lengthy attempts at a Joke, in which Etty, with familiar friends, was fond of indulging. He and his friend Cottingham, the 'Gothic' Architect, carried on much innocent and elaborate Child's play, (by letter), under the assumed characters of 'Abbot,' 'Monk,' or 'Hermit'; loving to make believe at Gothic times even in that remote way. Reporting, again, to his friend Bodley the purchase of a picture, Etty will sometimes convert himself and his peaceful friend into 'Knights'—of such and such a cognizance.

His Cottage on the Mount had its *sobriquet*,—of 'Frog Hall,'—originating in a favoured frog-denizen of the little back garden: towards whom he had extended his merciful protection. He had assigned the frog a trough, wherein it had consented to abide, cheerfully accepting the hospitality of the Painter: who, besides providing free quarters, supplied his *protégé* means of communication with his friends,—a stick slanting from said trough to the ground. Up

which movable ladder, as the host was fond of relating, another frog,—an old acquaintance he supposed,—*did* crawl every evening to associate with the solitary. 'Thus there's friendship between frogs,' concluded Etty. During the residence at 'the Wood House,' a whole budget of letters to a fair neighbour is written in the name and character of its inmate, 'Felix Frog,' in Etty's laborious style of drollery.

The kindness of heart which always engaged Etty's sympathies on the side of the unfortunate, and prevented his saying an ill word of any one, was equally shown in his life-long friendship for his humbler 'fellow-mortals.' The same simplicity of character the same sensitiveness which made him writhe with pain himself in hearing a tale of distress, and shrink from looking at a Newspaper with its daily quota of strife and crime; which made him—applied to by a fellow-Artist in distress,—restless for the day, till he had inquired into it, and contributed assistance, also made him a vehement foe to 'the 'miserable and diabolic pleasure of destruction for 'its own sake.' On the leads, at the top of his Buckingham Street aery,—where he used to walk and gaze on the River and the Sunsets,—comfortable quarters were always accorded a complete 'happy 'family,' twenty in number often; tame rabbits, bantams, pigeons, singing birds; while favoured cats and kittens strayed at large under a watchful *surveillance*. Regular inquiries after the well-doing of his pets, and injunctions to 'be careful' of them, are scattered over his Letters to his Niece. When Death invades the little circle, mournful elegies

fail not. In the *silence* of the *Life* School at the Academy, the mice used to come out from under the 'throne,' and were continually running over Etty's feet: who, in return would crumble bread for them.—On one of his Yorkshire excursions, at a halt he and his friends made, his eye happened to be much taken by the fine plumage of the bantams in the inn-yard. There were fowls for dinner, of which Etty refused to eat. 'I suspect them to be my 'friends,' cried he.

After six months lying in harbour to repair broken health, Etty yearns for familiar London, and more engrossing avocations; finds, (*November 30th*), the 'winter nights long without the Life-Academy;' 'York pleasanter in Summer:' and an exchange of the 'delights of study' for 'dinners and card parties,' 'a poor' one. Even in York he had been, as we saw, 'very busy,—painting.' 'I shall,' he had reported, (*Nov. 22nd*), 'if all be well, finish this week;' 'have had an Exhibition of my Pictures at the Cot-'tage, and crowds to see them for the last three 'days. Am convinced it will do good for another 'year, or any future attempt at an Exhibition I may 'make here, with things of more consequence. * * 'I am going to the Manor to tea, and to sketch 'some ladies.'

CHAPTER XIX.

AMENDS FOR LOST TIME. 1834—1836. (ÆT. 47—49.)

Busy Production—The Dealers—Thirty Years' Study—'The Age'—Manchester—Stage Coach Days—Dilettante—'Subjectless' Pictures—The Lawrence Collection—'The Arts in England'—An 'Historical' Superstition—Models—The *Adam and Eve*—A York Exhibition—A Magnet—St. Mary's.

EARLY in December (1834) Etty was ensconced once more in his Painting-room: his head full of subjects, and hand eager to execute them. Already, he is meditating a sixth large Picture, the *Ulysses* of 1837; already has conceived the glowing poem of *Pluto and Proserpine,* achieved in 1839. Intent on making up for lost time, he promptly re-entered on the old familiar course of unflagging exertion.

For assistance in the background of the *Phædria and Cymochles* (a second of that subject), Etty applies, (*January 21st*), to his friend Bodley, for one of the Studies of Sea made at Brighton: 'that piece of '*summer-sea,*' in which figures 'our old friend the 'pie-bald (or white) horse, standing in the Fly. I 'wish to alter my present Picture. A *winter*-sea 'would not do.' This study, one of much beauty, and his first from Brighton-sea, was often in request; made several journeys to and from Buckingham Street.

Sunny compositions are springing to life, despite the dark days of a London winter: 'darkness that

'may be felt' hanging 'over this great city, like a 'plague over Babylon.—To-day, (*January* 21*st*), much 'better, but not *my* weather: cold and heartless, not 'genial and mild.'

Of the numerous (modern Picture) Dealers, who in subsequent years relied so much for their supply on Etty, the first in the field was Mr. Colls, who, in his appreciation of Etty, was, (as late as 1835), in advance of the rest of the world. His connection with the Painter, one fruitful in minor works of Fancy, commenced in the Spring of that year, with the purchase of a beautiful picture,—*Wood Nymphs Sleeping: Satyr bringing Flowers, Morning;*—at a price in keeping with those Etty then commanded, £55. After many a subsequent change from hand to hand, it, in 1851, realized £500. Mr. Colls remembers buying of Etty during the immediately subsequent period, five other Pictures, at about fifty guineas each; one, an important work, 'containing 'twenty-one figures,'—*Christ Blessing Little Children.* All which, as many others of succeeding years, secured originally for an old song, as it would now be thought, —£10, £20, £30,—and sold at a moderate advance;—have been bought by the same Dealer again, and sold, bought and sold over and over: until by successive stages reaching £300 and £400.

Another Picture, the *Nymph and Young Faun Dancing*, was (in 1835) offered by Etty to his new admirer, in the kind letter from which the following is an extract.—

'As I cannot but feel flattered by your evident 'partiality for my works, I am disposed to meet your

'wishes:'—'at the same time cautioning you to 'think *well* on the subject; knowing, as I have 'done, by my own experience, how much a passion 'for the collection of works of Art "grows with what 'it feeds on;" and how much a desire of that sort 'is apt, in young and enthusiastic minds, to make 'them forget what they ought to think on.—Pardon 'this digression. If it is still your wish, as you 'expressed it on Tuesday,—you can, if you like, have 'the *Nymph and Young Faun Dancing* for "forty-'five guineas, without the frame." And should you 'afterwards, fall in love with any picture of mine of '£250 or £300 (price), I will take it back at that 'consideration, in part exchange; though it is not a 'usual way of my managing these matters.'

The fruit of four months' vigorous exertion in his Painting-room, ensuing to the six of absence, was an appearance in full strength at the Academy. Some who had scarcely expected, during his illness of the previous year, he would again find strength to paint, —were startled by the numerous progeny which bespoke his renewed energies in 1835. In place of the *two* minor pictures of the previous year, we have *eight*, mostly of importance; indicating no loss, but gain, from the past involuntarily fallow season. All were vigorously conceived; of vehement yet solid execution; firm in Drawing, the tone mellow, the Colour lustrous, and deep in harmony: a style combining spirit and finish.

A fresh start was in truth, being made, commencing with pictures like the *Venus and her Satellites*, and the *Warrior Arming;* and, in a few years, culmi-

nating in the *Ulysses*, the *Adam and Eve*, the *Pluto and Proserpine*. Works these, which witness to a serene and liberal harvest-time, creative force—mature, while fresh, (still),—habits of execution, masterly and *free*. It was not without meaning that Etty spoke of more than one of these, as embodying 'the study of 'nearly thirty years.' They *were*, substantially, the product of thirty years, though painted in one. Thirty years of struggle, of failure, of laborious effort, of progressive development, ever-growing mastery of his native powers, had enabled him to paint so: swiftly yet decisively; hand fully responding to will.

The *Warrior Arming*, afterwards christened by the more pretensious title, "Godfrey of Bouillon," the *Bridge of Sighs*, and *Preparing for a Fancy Dress Ball*, had stood over from 1833; profiting by the additional consideration and new effort expended on them.

The *Bridge of Sighs*, a Picture, for its own sake, and for its associations, much valued by the Painter, a sample of his poetic art, was purchased by Mr. Digby Murray for £100.

For *Venus and her Satellites*, Etty, having refused *one* offer, was, as usual, afraid of over-standing his market. It was secured by the Rev. E. P. Owen for less than the 300 guineas asked. Sixteen hundred guineas have *since*, (in private), been proffered for it. The Painter, 'truly happy' that his 'dear *Venus* has 'got into hands that will appreciate her,' wishes her fortunate possessor 'many happy years of life and 'sunshine to enjoy the art,—I think I may say 'without vanity,—I have put into the Picture.' It

always remained a favourite with its Author; and fully merited his kind remembrance: comprising in small compass, most of his characteristic excellences. It still continues one of the least known of his works; never having left the possession of its first purchaser, nor having been exhibited at the Society of Arts in 1849.

After these eight Pictures had been completed, another was commenced in the course of the summer, —*Venus, Cupid, and Psyche.*

Ground was decidedly gained with the public this season: one, in pecuniary results, the best he had as yet experienced. The working campaign, though short, had produced or finished a larger number of Pictures than ordinary; all finding a ready sale.

In August, during a few days' stay in Shropshire with the possessor of *Venus and her Satellites,* a Portrait of a local worthy, Archdeacon Bather, was commenced for the Clergy of the district; afterwards engraved by Cousens. The £60, Etty was in the habit of charging for full-sized Portraits, was still a welcome windfall. Much imagination, and much Art, had to be expended on works of a higher class, realizing an equal amount.

Towards the end of the same month, Etty set forth for his York Cottage; finding, he tells his Niece, (*September 20th*), the 'Age Coach,' which conveyed him to Lincoln on his way to Hull, 'a good emblem 'of the Age we live in. Boasting itself the only 'Coach, puffing with its key-bugle its own praises and 'pretensions, in every town, village, and hamlet, it 'came near; starting fair, and for a while going on

'swimmingly, but sadly disappointing us of what it 'pretended to: letting us down miserably in a ditch 'at last, to flounder out as we best could. Our '*Leaders* that had led us into the scrape, leaving us 'to our fate, and making the best of their way back 'to their own stable:—"*Sauve qui peut.*"'

Similar, he fears, 'will be the end of our present 'steam-engine generation: puff and fume, noise, 'smoke, and turmoil; looking at ourselves in the 'glass of self-admiration, and crying what a wonder-'fully enlightened people we are.'

From York he paid a visit to Manchester: where he had so often exhibited, and where sometimes, his Pictures had found purchasers,—at no extravagant sums.

'Set safe down,' he reports to his Niece, (*September 4th*), among 'the thousand steam-chimneys;'—'the 'world seems going by steam, save me and thee;'—'I changed my dusty coat for a clean one, and started 'for the Exhibition,—a splendid Hall, with Steps and 'Columns like a Temple. There, I had to mention 'my name to get my free admission. It was soon 'buzzed about that it was "Mr. Etty." And I had 'scarce been in the room five minutes, before I got 'a commission to paint a hundred-guinea Picture!—'from a gentleman of the name of Grant.'

Shown, of course, a few of the 'lions,' he saw 'one 'of their immense Mills for preparing cotton twist,' with its 'machinery, and what it does,'—'wonder-'ful,'—seeming 'almost endowed with intelligence;' saw also 'the train start on the railroad:'—in 1835 a novelty. After having received 'great attention' in Manchester, he returned, more than ever delighted

with 'the pure clean air' of 'dear Old York;'—in the latter, 'after the smoke, bustle, and din of Leeds or 'Manchester,—which by the way I must respect,'—experienced 'something very consolatory and gra-'tifying.'

A portrait (of a Lady) numbered among his employments in the Cathedral City; a Concert and a Fancy Ball among the amusements.

The journey from York to London in those days, even by a 'flying coach,' was of some twenty-four hours' duration; and by Etty, on each repetition, esteemed deserving the minute recording. He generally left in the evening.—'As the Minster's sonorous 'clock struck eight, my chariot wheels were not long 'in coming. As they passed your door,'—he recounts, (*from London*), to his late neighbours,—'and that of my little mansion now forsaken, (except 'by Froggy); and' as 'the light of the coach-lamps 'glanced momentarily on the walls, I caught a parting 'look at each. Shadows deep closed on all the dear 'scene. Trees, bushes;—then Tadcaster, Ferry 'Bridge, and at midnight, the silent Doncaster and 'its gas-lights. When stopping to change at some 'lone inn, the roar of the mighty wind amongst 'the trees, and the stalk of the poor tired horses 'to the stable, were some of the only sounds heard. 'Morning dawns; and "light awakes the world." '* * At eight, by the Minster, we left the Square 'of St. Helen's (York). At eight by St. Andrew's, 'Holborn, the following evening, we were just by 'Fetter Lane end. Before nine, I and my many 'traps were safe in home-quarters, landed in the

'passage. I sent Jehu up stairs to knock. Down 'comes Franklin running, then "sure enough," Kitty. 'Up the boxes and portmanteaus are whisked; then 'I. There's my bonny Bessy. She looks affection, 'but speaks none; has lost her voice,—but got it 'again, next morning. Walter too, with his cap on: '—a sure sign he has a cold. There, old Tom' '(another Brother), 'little Bob, and young Walter,' (nephews); 'last, not least, savoury and inviting, the 'Goose. * * I had munched a dry biscuit on 'the coach instead of dining:' so that, after an outside ride since early breakfast at seven, the latter sight was least of all amiss.

In renovated health, his now chronic cough bettered, but 'dreading the winter,' he entered a renovated home; 'his little room' looking beautiful: the 'white and green, and gold,—and coloured *Tableaux*. 'But look there! There's my new Monkish Altar: a 'pure white cloth with beautiful fringe; on *it* a 'splendid Crucifix,—the figure of Christ exquisite. 'Above that, the *Entombment of Christ,*' (a Drawing) 'by Raphael. On one side, behind the Crucifix, a 'figure of *Justice*, eternal Justice, after Raphael; on 'the other, *Theology*, after the same. Beneath the 'Crucifix, a silvery Butterfly, emblem of the Soul, 'enriched with a crown of thorns in wrought silver; 'a Chalice and Sacramental Cup, a row of catholic 'Beads and cross; an hour-glass, three ancient books '(centuries old). On the right, look! and you'll see 'a piece of deep black velvet, with border and tassels 'of gold; on it, a cross of richest crimson velvet.

'Lift up the corner, and you will see—not what we 'are, but what we soon shall be.'

His 'head full of pictures' again, he made the working season (1835—36) a long and fruitful one; though less than usual was completed for the London Exhibition,—'only a few small pictures.'—'I over-'rated the time I had,' he owns by the Spring. 'The large picture I intended for this, must not be 'till next year. But I am and have been very fully 'occupied.'

While he is busy producing new Pictures, an every-day casualty is dealing destructively with old ones. 'Did I not,' continues Etty, (*to Mrs. Bulmer, March 27th*), 'take you and Cicely to the Western Ex-'change, Bond Street,—a Picture Gallery,—where 'you saw a fine Paolo Veronese (large), a large 'Rubens, and other pictures? I wished them to 'have it,' (the Veronese), 'at the National Gallery. 'Last night my Betsey and I saw from our roof, about 'twelve o'clock, a dreadful fire, in the direction of 'Bond Street. I little thought it was those fine 'pictures. The light, sparks, and even flames, were 'dancing over the long line of housetops. The fire 'began at a tailor's, communicated to the Bazaar: 'the whole of which, with pictures and property to 'the amount of £30,000 or £40,000, was soon de-'stroyed. Two friends of mine who lived next; 'Hookham,' with his 'extensive library; and Car-'penter, the Bookseller, escaped by a miracle. The 'fire attacked the latter's roof. And his valuable 'books and pictures were in the greatest jeopardy.'

This letter accompanies, among other little presents, a 'Print of the *Dangerous Playmate*, a lithograph:—'*tolerably* well, though not quite what I should like.'

For the Academy, finishing touches were added to the *Venus, Cupid, and Psyche*:—'Psyche laying the 'Casket at Venus's feet, Cupid pleading in her behalf.' He completed, also, *Venus and her Doves*,—for Mr. Grant;—and the *Family of the Forests*:—a Painter's dream of unsophisticated family circles. 'Subjectless pictures,' complained certain connoisseurs. According to these wiseacres, the *subject* makes the Painter or the Poet.

Such Groupings of Nude Form for its own sake were becoming more and more frequent on Etty's canvas. 'Venus and Cupid,' 'Venus and Psyche,' 'Venus,' &c.,—always favourite *Dramatis Personæ* of his,—figured just now with especial frequency among the titles of his works: to be succeeded by the 'Bathers' and 'Studies' of later years. In number, a preponderating class of Etty's works, especially during the last fifteen years of his life; these were all,—just as were many nominally 'Historic' themes themselves, such as the *Choice of Paris; Candaules;* &c.;—but the *text*, enabling him to expatiate on what he most of all delighted to dwell: and yearly, more and more so. Every year, conscious of increasing power and facility of hand, it was ever a greater delight to express the beauties of the human form, and to arrest its evanescent charms: of that female form, above all so difficult to others, wherein lay his greatest delight and Mastery; which, it has been justly said, no Englishman ever worthily painted before.

The years 1835-6 were not without their public question to command the Painter's sympathies. The Lawrence Collection of Original Drawings by the Old Masters, whether it should be wholly lost to the Nation or not, was a vexed question:—which hardly would have been a vexed question in any country but England. A Government indifferent to Art, acting for a people indifferent because long strangers to it, neglected this chance, as so many others, of turning to public account a private Collector's energy, knowledge, and opportunities: dead to the peculiar value of that unique Collection. Nothing in Art which cannot boast the gloze of *finish*, makes any appeal to uncultured eyes, or to a puny Taste. An assemblage of Drawings, to which it yearly becomes more difficult to form a parallel, the Trustees of the Public Money stolidly refused to secure:—to secure for £20,000, what had cost Lawrence £30,000 or more. The Messrs. Woodburn, who purchased the Collection intact, proved more enterprising than our Bœotian rulers; who ultimately allowed it to be broken up:—one part going to Oxford, others into private hands, the more considerable portion remaining till now in the hands of the Woodburns.

Ere the golden opportunity had passed by of obtaining the whole, Etty had warmly urged its National acquisition; actively uniting with others in inviting the Government to that step. The Committee appointed at a Meeting of Artists to petition Parliament to purchase the Drawings, held its preparatory meeting in his Studio. After the Drawings had *begun* to be 'scattered like the Sibyls' leaves,' fol-

lowing 'the fate of the Orleans and Houghton Gal-'leries,' and while a portion of the finest were being exhibited by the Woodburns, under the protection of glass,—a hint showing how the public might be enabled to profit by them,—Etty still advocated repairing the blunder, before wholly irreparable. His Letter to the *Morning Herald*, (*Feb. 25th*, 1836), shows him one of those modern Artists who really sympathize with the Ancient Masters. *Their* beauties, indeed, formed one of the few themes on which he was prone to discourse:—their beauties and his year in Venice. Chatting on the Arts in his Studio, the while rubbing his paints on his marble slab, he would sometimes speak of those disposed to praise the living at the expense of the dead; averring they little showed knowledge or sense in the attempt to disparage the Great Names.

The Lawrence Drawings, he describes in this Letter, with discerning enthusiasm, as 'the first 'thoughts of the first men of all ages since the 'Revival of the Art: the bud and blossom of' much 'glorious fruit; bearing the vivid stamp and impress 'of their genius. In some of the series, you see the 'interesting struggle of the noble thought with 'doubt and difficulty, in that incipient stage of com-'position where, as Dryden says, thought stumbles 'over thought in the dark: till, by successive efforts, 'Beauty rises like order out of chaos; and those 'splendid works were produced which for centuries 'have shed light and heat through the whole hemi-'sphere of Art.'

The Collection, he insists, had it been accorded

an enduring National Home, would have given our Public Gallery, 'in the class of *Drawings*, a supe-'riority over the Louvre itself;' and have 'formed 'a new era in the Arts of this country:' besides 'interestingly connecting with the splendid acquisi-'tion, the name of the tasteful and illustrious Artist 'who formed the Collection, and was himself one of 'the brightest ornaments,'—&c. * * 'A grander 'aim would be given to the talent of our Artists. 'And,—presupposing that talent called into proper 'action,—men capable of bending the bow of Ulysses 'would not be wasting their time, or at best dissi-'pating it, on trifles unworthy of themselves or their 'country.'

He remembers how 'Prince Talleyrand paid re-'peated visits to these Drawings, in company with, 'I believe, one, if not more of the Ministers in 'power at the time; and, after looking over a con-'siderable portion of them in detail, at his last visit 'in rising to retire, addressed to them this pithy 'observation; "*Si vous n'achétez pas ces choses-lá vous 'étes des barbares.*"' The simple-minded Academician mentions also, with characteristic emotion, 'the 'noble vote of £1000,—in aid of a public subscrip-'tion to purchase them for the nation,—by that Body 'to which I have the honour to belong.'

But, as he commences with saying, 'we, flatter-'ing ourselves that we are without doubt one of the 'most refined and enlightened of nations, content-'edly let slip one after another, the opportunities of 'making ourselves really so,—*at least in the Fine Arts.* '* * We really are so *very* enlightened'—'that our

'vision is, (to use a French word), *offusqué*;—so 'dazzled by the light we cannot see our way.'

At the close, he states his notion of Government Patronage to be: 'that no half measures will do 'good, but harm; that either the Government should 'leave as hitherto,' Art's 'sacred and vestal fires 'to be kept alive by the self-devotion of the Artists, 'seconded by a few liberal, tasteful, and patriotic 'individuals; *or*' give the Arts 'that heartfelt and 'effective impulse *alone* worthy of a great nation. 'We studiously copy the fashions, some of the frivo-'lities, and even the vices of the French. Let us 'do better: imitate'—'their fostering care and pro-'tection of the Fine Arts.'

This Letter on 'The Arts in England,' he followed up, by another, (*July* 18*th*, 1836), wherein, amplifying the concluding hint of the last, he expresses feelings common among Painters. For he shared the current superstition, so gratuitous and unreflecting, that 'Government,' unbacked by wide-spread love of Art in the community, can do great things. The experience of after years may have helped to undeceive him, in part.

A few samples, omitting surplusage, and incoherences, will suffice to give the gist of Etty's pleadings. It must be borne in mind that in 1836, 'the New Palace at Westminster' was yet in its beginnings: that the Cause in which 'Historical' practitioners take so lively an interest,—the public employment of Painters,—yet continued in a bad way.

'"They manage these things better in France,"' 'said my Uncle Toby, as he sat in his chimney-

'corner, smoking his pipe. To which I, sitting in 'the opposite one, with sorrow but sincerity, echo '"better in France."'

'I have had some *vagrant* thoughts on this subject, 'dear Mr. Editor, which I should like to *commit* 'to your *custody*.'—'The sweet influences of the 'Arts on the broad and vulgar world, are like the 'sight and smell of a freshly-gathered bunch of roses, 'glittering with dew, in a hot and crowded city. 'They are an oasis in the desert; something that 'shows we are not altogether "of the earth, earthy;" 'a breath from Paradise.'—'It is our duty, as Art-'ists,'—he continues, lower down,—'to be the guar-'dians of those Arts,' to prevent 'their still, sweet 'voice from being drowned in the clamour of politics, 'the din of commerce, or the rattle of railways. 'These may be all very well to a certain extent, as 'some of the means, certainly not as the end and 'aim of life: the legitimate object of which appears 'to be the advancement of the mind and heart of 'man.' * *

'At a time when the French Government are 'giving a mighty impetus to the genius and talents 'of *their* Artists, by extensive employ, magnificent 'prospects of palaces and churches filled with His-'torical works; when immense sums are every year 'generously and *judiciously* voted for these great 'National objects; when a colony of the Arts is, and 'has been, for centuries, maintained with a princely 'munificence, for their study in Rome,—their eternal 'capital: *what are we doing?* With talent springing

'up, which would, properly directed and employed, 'be a lasting honour and advantage to our country, 'it is but too probable these promising buds may 'wither from the frost of neglect and disappoint-'ment.' * *

'Why is our Gallery of the Old Masters called the 'National, seeing that the pictures are not, for the 'most part, of our nation? I should like to see a '*truly* National Gallery, one that with pride and 'pleasure an Englishman might show: where the 'virtues, the heroism, and genius of his country 'might be *recorded*, to the most remote posterity.' * *

'It is my ardent desire to see England take as 'proud a station in the Arts, as she has in arms, and 'commerce. Why should she not? I see the power 'exists that can give it: only call it forth; and 'give the Artists of our country fair play.'—'It may 'be said, I am crying out for commissions for my-'self. It is not so. I like not things which touch '"the freedom of my mind." But I *do* wish to see 'that "blot on our escutcheon," neglect of Historic 'Art, brushed away.'—

Among Etty's private correspondence of this date, a familiar letter to a brother Historical Painter, Mr. Patten, which may be taken as the representative of a class, affords a glimpse of the difficulties a painter of Etty's range of subject has to encounter in securing a supply of suitable models.

'I did not know, (*writing April 7th*, 1836), you 'were knocking at my door yesterday, or I should 'have asked you in to take another rib:—your wife

'need not be alarmed,—I meant a rib of lamb. And I 'should not have said, with our former friend, "There 'is no such person here."

'You left word you wanted a fine Model. It is 'difficult. Mrs. S.—, whom I sent you, has some 'very good points: a short figure and a fine head. 'Miss R.— at a cap-shop, in —— Street, (private 'door), is a good colour and proportion, but rather 'thin. I have lately made sketches in outline of 'several, in order to get a small figure I am going to 'paint as good as I can.' This was the Eve in the *Adam and Eve at their Orisons*. 'I have found two 'out of the number, fine. One, her name is H—, of 'a fine form and bright colour.'—'I am endeavouring 'to persuade her to get money in a way more artis-'tical: to sit to Artists and Academies. She would 'be an acquisition. She sat to me for an hour and a 'half, to make sketches from: and I think she might 'soon be broken in. You might write a twopenny 'letter and try. Say, I recommended her. An-'other, with a fine figure, *her* name is Y—: also, a 'fine form of torso, and nice colour. If either of 'them could be induced to sit, and be punctual to 'their engagements, they would be acquisitions. * * 'P.S. I am going to write to H—, to try if she can 'be made useful to Art.'

In other notes to his friend, dating from various years, Etty tells him, 'for your and their advantage,' of 'new Models which are good,' as he discovers them: one, it may be, male and 'youthful;' a female, 'brunette,' another 'fair.' Now, it is 'an oriental,' a 'civil man, and sits well;' now, a female model 'for

'arms;' or again, one who has a 'nice bust, throat, 'and figure:' to which good points is superadded another not less important to an Artist, that of punctuality.

Only three pictures had been exhibited at the Academy, pictures of fancy, of glowing beauty, and force; such as no other than Etty could paint: none, however, characterized by foremost imagination. One, higher in aim, was under his hands,—*the Adam and Eve at their Morning Orisons:* a picture which he had determined to paint at his very best. The slip-slop of which during the last ten years of his life,—when no longer a *promising,* but an established name,—Etty was to hear so much, had begun to be a staple in the sleep-walking criticism of the day: about his inability to draw, his 'voluptuousness,' &c. In the *Adam and Eve,* Etty aimed at perfection of Form, and at showing that he could paint a naked man and woman expressive of pure and devotional feeling. To realize the former, was undertaken the unusually active chase and in all kinds of places, alluded to in the letter to Mr. Patten. He wanted a female model to which he might wholly adhere in his Eve: not according to his ordinary custom, painting a bit from one, a good point from another, &c. Many sketches were made, great part of the year and much money spent, in seeking, before he found, a model nearly perfect:—the waist alone faulty, 'not round enough,' from which he accordingly deviated in his picture. In feeling, and in execution, his picture was a complete success.

'Lowly they bow'd adoring.' * *

It is to be regretted this sample of his poetic treat-

ment of the Nude was not exhibited at the Society of Arts in 1849.

It was one of Etty's few commissions; painted for Mr. Beckford, to fit some vacant compartment 'over 'a door,' in the crowded house of the wealthy connoisseur. That eccentric 'Arbiter of Taste' had, to the credit of his discernment, a high notion of Etty's genius; though amid the vast sums squandered on crotchets and puerilities, finding comparatively little, to invest in the great Painter's works. He affirmed him to be 'the only Painter for Immortality 'of his day:'—an assertion which, slightly qualified, remembering the greatest of Landscape-Painters, remains truer than many of that gentleman's dicta. As far as Etty is concerned, time will surely verify the prediction.

During the summer of 1836, both the *Adam and Eve*, and an important picture of the 'subjectless' class, *Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, were finished expressly for a York Exhibition, and there *first* exhibited. To this, an experimental one, Etty had, with his wonted local feeling,—desirous too of giving his fellow-townsmen 'some taste of his quality,'—contributed on its opening as many as six samples of his handiwork; adding before its close, and after that of the Academy, the two already mentioned, and the *Family of the Forests*. The latter was purchased by his friends, the Harpers, for £50;—has since been sold for £350. Among the Pictures of former years he was at the pains of borrowing from their owners, were the *Parting of Hero and Leander*, Mr. Vernon's *Venetian Window*, the *Sabrina*, the *Hylas*.

Inhabitants of York contributed four Portraits from his hand. So considerable a leaven of important examples from a Master in the Art must alone have lent the gathering a superior tone to that ordinarily characterizing first attempts at Provincial Exhibitions: a superiority, more considerable towns might have envied,—and have better valued.

Set on foot by the small party in York active in the good cause,—Etty's friend, John Harper, a zealous leader,—the Exhibition, it was hoped, might educe some interest in Art in the town. In which laudable object, though the experiment did 'pay its 'expenses,' their success was not sufficient to encourage the projectors to repeat it. A Cathedral City is no favourable arena for movements towards popularizing Art and extending the sphere of its influence. There is scarcely life *enough* to respond to a public call of any kind. In those centres of the life of our day, the wide-awake, manufacturing towns Etty liked so ill, there ensues to magnified size and quickened activity, a proportionate quickening of higher capabilities. Only on their freer stage, experience proves, can an adequate interest be aroused in any stirring cause,—Art, Literature, or other humanizing influence. At that date, and down to a later one, the good people of York,—no enthusiasts for Art even now,—scarcely cared, as one of themselves confesses, to look at a picture: still less, at an Etty. Unassisted, they could not 'for *their* part see anything in him.' The echo of his Fame from a distance, alone taught them there *was* anything. It had been long a cherished wish of the patriotic Painter's, to execute a large picture for

his native city. At one time, he had thought of the Minster, at another, of a large vacant panel in the Yorkshire Museum; and was willing to have filled said panel with a noble Historic work, had a sufficient sum, (£100, say), been raised to defray the bare cost. Of which generous offer, York cared not to avail itself. A 'Proposal to invite Mr. Etty to paint an 'appropriate Historical Picture' attracted to itself just eight names:—all, personal friends or acquaintance. So enlightened a public spirit ruled in the place.

The Painter was willing to make sacrifices of money, not of dignity. To a miscellaneous Exhibition, mechanical and artistic, got up at the York Mechanics' Institute some years subsequent to this first—and last,—legitimate York 'Exhibition,' Etty refused to contribute; despite his interest in everything connected with his native town:—thought it degrading to High Art to mix paintings with mere curiosities, &c. For he cherished high notions of his Art, and of the particular walk, with its grand traditions, to which he had from youth dedicated himself.

In the Autumn of 1836, before leaving for the now indispensable annual sojourn in York, the large canvas for the *Sirens* had been set up in the Painter's Studio.—'A magnetic attraction two hundred miles 'off,' it stirred homeward thoughts from the beginning. Wistful longings to be at work were more frequent than was his wont in that happy retirement. As early as '*Sept. 14th, Holy Cross,*' as he dates his letter, he discovers he 'shall be very glad' to get 'pictures and self safe back in Buckingham Street:

'all ready to begin; *Bairn* by my side,—kettle sing-'ing, fire golden, tea-things ready.'

Though he had 'come to play,' he had as usual been working. Among his voluntary vacation tasks, he executed a 'commission,' as he styles it, for his Niece,—a small-sized head of her father, one of his own brothers: a vigorous and characteristic portrait. 'It looks grave, but is very like. Get thy brass 'ready. Commissions paid for on delivery.'

Another 'nice study,' he has also 'to-day,' (*Sept. 14th*), finished: 'the head of little Mary Ann,' niece one remove. And he has 'been making a little 'portrait, or, rather,' is 'now making one, of Miss 'Harper, which like thine is a *commission*: and like 'thine, I look for pay.'—'I believe,' he continues, 'the *Family of the Forests* has found a father: I 'hope not a step-father.'—'Franklin has not been 'idle: has drawn my garden,—which he hopes 'thou willst buy of him, and encourage "native '"talent," now thou art giving commissions;—a bit 'of St. Mary's Abbey, and some other things.'

The Painter does not wholly neglect 'play' for work; 'dining out' more than sufficiently: 'by 'invitation, at the Deanery; next day at Tang Hall,' &c. And 'Monday evening, *we* gave a grand enter-'tainment at Abbey Cottage, "to several persons of 'distinction:" tea and toast, and other rarities of the 'season.'—'Don't be surprised, if I *should* make my 'market: and then, my lass, thou'lst have to take up 'thy bed and walk. Only don't take up mine. It's 'a very warm and comfortable one.' For York, he has meanwhile, bought himself 'such a splendid old-

'fashioned bed-hanging,—like Paolo Veronese. That 'and the creamy blanket look well.'

Excursions varied the programme of his recreation: to the neighbourhood of Richmond, famed as its Middlesex namesake for beauty, one of three days, with Mr. Brook. And a little sketch was made of the Abbey of St. Agatha, 'beautifully situated in a 'romantic valley by a river-side: where, the dash of 'waters and the silence of its solitude dispose the 'mind to think and the heart,' &c. 'The noble 'feudal tower of Richmond Castle' duly impresses him, 'lifting its head from an almost inaccessible 'rock, frowning defiance,' and 'attesting the power 'of Alan le Roux, one of William the Norman's 'chief followers:' who 'also, founded St. Mary's at 'York.' Other memorable places 'among the high 'hills of Hambleton' have been seen: *more* 'ancient 'castles, loftily and romantically situate,' &c.

The 'Frog Hall' of the previous two years had been exchanged for the 'Abbey Cottage,' wherefrom these letters date: a commodious habitation in Mary-Gate, near the river, a prettier position, though scarcely so healthful, as the last.

'The apples are hanging on the trees. The poplars 'wave in the breeze. The robins sing.' Within view, stands the ruined Abbey; which suggests thoughts frequent with Etty and characteristic: its beautiful remaining 'Arches pleading haughtily against the 'base passions of the detestable monster that laid 'their holy honours in the dust. The breeze whispers 'in the foliage that overshadows them, and seems to 'tell of years that are gone.' But 'a steam-engine

'or two vomit their infernal breath into the air that 'echoed the vesper and matin hymns, now for ever 'mute. And folks say, "How we are improved!" 'Gracious Heaven! pity us, and forgive! They put 'me in mind of the sensual grovellers in Milton's '*Comus*: who, when their vices had reduced them 'them to swine,—

> '"Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
> 'But boast themselves more comely than before."

'So we, grovelling, despise and forget the glories of 'the olden time, and boast of achievements far sur- 'passing them:—which will, in my opinion, be for- 'gotten long ere the ruins of the "*Dark* Ages" shall 'pass away.'—In any case, 'they who reared them,— 'and praised in them the God of Ages,—shall *not* pass 'away; but live for ever in the joy of His presence, 'in temples beyond the reach of the infernal Harry:— 'who, I hope and trust, meets the reward of *his* 'merit.'

Having stayed to superintend the safe return of his pictures from the York Exhibition, Etty on his way home took Upton Hall, in Derbyshire: there leaving his recently-finished *Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, purchased by Mr. Wright for a hundred and twenty guineas.

CHAPTER XX.

AMBITION AND ITS REWARD. 1836—37. (ÆT. 49-50.)

Concentrated Effort—Large Pictures: a Current Misconception—Swift Execution, and Sure—Attendance in the Life-Academy: as Student—as 'Visitor'—Trafalgar Square: A Triumph—Its Alloy—Smaller Essays—Blake Street—A Close Bargain—Hopes of a Commission—Amateur Romanism—Sympathies with the Past—False Alarm—Volunteer Counsel—Anonymous Mentors—Picture-Beggars.

ETTY entered his Painting-room full of energy and eagerness for his great work: intent on *laying* the uneasy thoughts which had pursued him in absence; on realizing many an imaginative dream such as had long haunted his mind. Nov. 14th, 1836, he commenced, 'in oils,' on *Ulysses and the Sirens:* projected in 1834, and at one time intended for the past Exhibition. In good earnest he pursued the task, throwing aside all minor ones; refusing to finish more Studies for the Dealers till *it* was completed. 'My reputation 'and interest,'—he tells Mr. Colls,—'demand that 'I should not trifle.' His *sixth* colossal picture, it was commenced five years after his last of similar size, the *Maid of Judith Waiting.* It has been a hasty assumption with some, that deficient encouragement checked Etty in his ambitious course. 'Had he been encouraged, what gigantic works 'would he not have produced!' exclaims one: a consummation devoutly *not* to be wished, as the rule of

a Painter's life. It never *was* Etty's ambition to paint only large Pictures. His *first* was executed when he was thirty-eight, his last, two years before his death. The *Sirens* stands midway between these points. All were achieved for Fame's sake merely, and the 'Honour of his Country.' For the *Combat,* the *Judith,* he, while painting them, had 'hardly dared to hope' a purchaser.

Under the inspiriting impetus of liberal Commissions, he might have been stirred up to paint more pictures 'exceeding the natural size,' (assuming *that* to be the desideratum in Art), than he had set himself to accomplish:—and *did* accomplish. The engrossing patronage of the Dealers for finished Studies and small works, certainly *delayed* the execution of the *Joan of Arc.* But what he had planned in the way of grand 'Historic' work, he ultimately compassed. He showed what he *could do* in the way of colossal pictures;—had never supposed them an indispensable condition to high achievement. He knew too much of the Art of Painting for that:—knew that many of the sweetest attributes of the Art cannot be developed upon a large expanse of canvas.

As the whole tenor of Etty's life bears witness, no lack of mere 'encouragement' was capable of turning him from his purpose,—from high resolves once formed. Large Historical pictures, though not colossal, are frequent, between 1825 and 1847: such as the *Choice of Paris,* the *Bevy of Fair Women, Youth at the Prow,* and others; and again, the *Pluto and Proserpine,* the *Ten Virgins,* the *Dance,* the *Graces,* the *Hesperus,* the *Circe,* the second *Choice of Paris.* What is more and better, there

are plenty, small in dimensions, rich in poetry and imagination:—the *Hero and Leander*, the *Prodigal* series, and many more, already familiar names to the reader. He painted in all sizes, and in all, well.

Ever resolute to have Nature, if possible, before him, Etty, while engaged on the *Sirens*, obtains from his friend Bodley 'the Sketch of stormy sea' painted at Brighton in a previous year: that he might, as nearly as might be, adhere to his recollection of 'the 'splendid scene' which, once witnessed, had retained so strong a hold on his mind. The result was that grand and imaginative background, so efficient a help to the sentiment of the Picture: one, Landseer admiringly affirmed to be the finest landscape he had ever seen.

For the more appalling details of the fatal Shore, which afterwards gave much offence to squeamish critics, he paid assiduous visits to charnel-houses, carefully studying from dead bodies in all the stages of decay. It never entered Etty's head to shirk or gloss over the realities of any story he had to paint: once it had secured his choice as a grand and pregnant theme, and much as by natural temperament, he leaned to the beautiful, the glowing, the happy.

He carried the work to a swift completion, considering the magnitude of it; finishing the *Sirens*,—and the *Dalilah* into the bargain,—for the following May Exhibition. *Less*, therefore, than five months sufficed for his colossal task. The idea had long lain germinating in his mind. And as regards the expression of it, he said truth when exclaiming of this, as of previous works, 'twenty years'

'labour is in that picture!' Such swiftness of execution, *if* accompanied by the adequate precision, is of course the best mode of any to express a Painter's thought. Little is lost by the way. The first conception is conveyed to canvas while warm with fresh and glowing force. It takes the matured Master to do it: And even he cannot long remain on such commanding ground. His purpose becomes less decisive, his hand more wavering. Brilliant sketchiness proves the sequel.

The last-named stage was still afar with Etty, notwithstanding his increasing productiveness, and the increasing seriousness of his chronic maladies,—rheumatism, asthma,—such as with a man of less energy, and of a less indomitable will, would have checked exertion. A lengthened period of mature power still lay before him.

The *Samson Betrayed by Dalilah* bears evidence intrinsic to having been painted contemporaneously with the *Sirens*. The impetus acquired in executing the greater effort was turned to account. The same powers are seen on a reduced scale. Small in size but large in manner, a compressed epic, it is the very perfection of the Cabinet Historic.

Five months of doubly active work, every way, were those always, from November till early April. The season of vigorous exertion in preparing for the Exhibitions, that also of rough weather, and of trying attacks of his cough, was the season of sedulous attendance at the Academy:—an attendance which still remained, after the lapse of thirty years, more regular than that of the youngest Student. Very

often, he attended two Academies in the same evening: one hour at the St. Martin's Lane, and one hour at the Royal; dividing his time pretty impartially between the two. With this attendance, no other claims were allowed to clash. 'The Academy is 'open,' was the sufficient answer to hospitable friends.—'I refuse all invitations, however attrac-'tive,' he would reply to dinner-invitations;' that 'might lead me to neglect what I consider an im-'portant duty.' Etty ever loved to believe himself fulfilling an 'important duty.' The word was a favourite with him, and one he used pretty freely. Reserved and retiring, not shining in society nor adapted for it, he loved his studies, and his stool at the Academy too well, to find what is called 'Society' any temptation. He was too happy in his Art to *desire* any other recreation. *That* was his recreation and chief delight. For he was one of the few who painted for love of painting, and of excellence in his Art; not for that of fortune, or of Fame on its own account,—otherwise, in fact, than as the shadow which follows excellence. As for painting from the *Life*, long practice had made it mere play to him. The Life-School was his passion; 'study' there, a pastime; constant attendance within its familiar walls, the habit and necessary part of his life. On the rare occasions when, during the Academy's Schools being open, he did yield to other engagements, he could not absent himself wholly: must still come in for ten minutes, sometimes dressed as for a party, leaving when the sands had run out,—not before.

Sense of duty, a very strong one, Etty had: genuine public spirit, a rare conscientiousness and integrity in performing thoroughly whatever he undertook. He was to the Academy in thought and act devoted, bound by ties of association and sentiment. To an Institution which had educated—or helped to educate him,—in his beloved Art, he attached himself with inflexible tenacity; as he did to all things equally involved with early remembrances.

Whatever office fell to his lot as Member, he zealously performed; together with many voluntary ones. He thought it right for instance,—for the hypothetic encouragement of the Students in their duty, and from his sense of the importance of everything connected with the Establishment,—diligently to attend every dull, oft-repeated lecture its Professors might deliver:—doing this with an apparent gusto, an air of consequence, as of fulfilling the great public duty he conceived it to be. Unhappy Students who suffered under Professors,—*not* such as Mr. Leslie,—fancied he might have found more nutritive recreation or employment,—over a book say,—at home.

As *Visitor* in the Life, Etty spared neither time nor trouble in fulfilling his part *well*. Saying but little, he yet took great pains with the younger Students; on the more advanced, seldom bestowing more than an approving nod or pat on the back.—'He 'rarely criticized my Study. I have often wished he 'had,' says Mr. Frost; himself an indefatigable Student, one who had sat next to Etty almost every night the Schools were open, for twenty years. Etty would occasionally give a little address, explaining the

intentions of the Figure, &c.: at which he sighed and hesitated a good deal. For he possessed 'a flowing 'pencil, anything but a flowing delivery,' remarks the last-mentioned admirer: to whom I am indebted for most of my present information.

The School invariably had good Models, and well-posed in his mouth; and generally on the last night, 'a Treat,' a complete picture set, as Flaxman and a few others had done before him: an unusual thing, which to the last used to make a great sensation among the Students.—'In my time, as a Student,' relates Mr. Maclise, 'I have known him set three or 'four models together. Now, it was a group of 'Graces; now, a composition of two or three Gladia-'tors.—Sometimes, a dark man or tawny female was 'introduced, for picturesque contrast with a fair 'form of the same sex. Sometimes, a Manikin in 'armour contrasted with the flesh; sometimes, a 'child with a woman; or picturesque accessory of 'velvet or satin drapery, of rich texture and hue,—a 'deep-coloured curtain or couch.'

A group of the 'Graces' Etty once set, comprised four figures, with accessories:—'pedestals, vases, 'flowers, fruits, rich draperies, incense burning, &c.' Previously to this *tableau vivant,* Constable, while Visitor, had placed a figure as 'Eve': introducing a large limb of a tree, with an apple suspended. 'When are we going to have another *landscape?*' asked Etty, one day of his brother Academician. 'When are we going to have another Phantasma-'goria?' retorted Constable.

In reference to that same 'Landscape,' Mr. Maclise

again writes:—'Etty made a beautiful study once 'from a female figure Constable had arranged as 'Eve;—with a laurel-tree behind her, from which 'were pendent numbers of that kind of orange called '"forbidden fruit." The glittering polished green of 'the leaves, and the deep orange of the fruit, you may 'be sure were well and happily expressed by a hasty 'touch or two.—Turner once, I recollect, arranged a 'female form in the same attitude as the *Venus de 'Medici*; standing by a cast of the latter brought in 'for the purpose. Of which, Etty made a study so 'beautiful, as might serve to prove the truth of 'Byron's lines:—

> "I've seen more lovely women, ripe and real,
> Than all the nonsense of their Beau-Idéal." '

In 1837, Etty saw his last of the *old* Life School of Somerset House; dear to him, as we have seen, from association, and for intrinsic reasons,—for its space and loftiness:—the dingy background, *à la Rembrandt*, contributing to give 'such glorious effect' to the Figure immediately under the gaslight. The exchange was to a very inferior room, at the top of the so-called National Gallery, where there is hardly room, assert its frequenters, for 'more than a dozen Students to get 'any but a *deformed* view of the figure.' On the last Study made in the School's old Home,—a back view of a Figure with a cross, (from Michæl Angelo's *Judgement*),—to be seen in 1850, among the others at Christie's, might be read his inscription of the period,—*Vale Domum!* During the last month at Somerset House, Constable being Visitor, Etty made him a present of a Study, of course a glorious bit of

flesh. 'You might eat it,' averred Constable, smacking his lips:—a cannibal-like encomium.

During the Spring of this year, the era of his venerated Academy's flitting to its 'new and splendid' home, Etty was on the Council, more than ordinarily occupied by the Academy's business,—its necessary 'new arrangements,' as well as with his own engrossing large picture. 'After the studies of the 'day at home, and thence till eight at the Academy,' he has 'to buckle to business (one or two nights a 'week), an hour or two more;' making it often near twelve ere he reaches 'home to tea.'—'But when we 'get the gallant ship under way, it will be a stately 'one;' and, he trusts, 'have a good effect in giving 'an impetus to the Arts of the country.'

Other consolations are not wanting. 'In Memory's 'Dreams,'—he writes, (*Feb. 19th*), to York,—'I yet 'revisit the *Mount:* see Father's old Mill; walk up 'to the brow of the hill, down the pathway by the 'Bealby's; see the sun set behind Acomb spire, stop 'and listen to the silence, till the evening star 'glimmers and sparkles in the blue profound. Then, 'I saunter back as far as your hospitable hearth, see 'the clean maiden bring in the bright brazen urn, 'the fire fair blazing. The cups which cheer,' &c., 'wait on each: John sitting by, and Master "Minus" 'on his mistress's lap; Cicely at her loom, at a work 'of bright design, in colour glowing, or at her piano, 'playing some fairy music; cockatoo anxious to gain 'a look, or notice, or bit conciliatory. Now stir the 'fire, John, and cast a cheerful blaze on all this 'pleasing scene,—drawn warm from Nature.' * *

His Pictures duly finished, hung, and varnished, the 'new arrangements' of his Academy in its 'classic' domicile complete, Etty reports progress to the same friends: on the day, (May 1st), when 'Chimney-'sweeps and Artists, both knights of the brush, hold 'their festival;' the first exhibiting 'colours and 'dances,' the second colours alone. He tells them of the battle he has been holding 'with the two giants, 'Difficulty and Time;' a battle, over now, and won: how severe the struggle had been to bring to a successful issue a Picture like the *Sirens*, '14 ft. 6 in. by 'about 10 ft. high,' 'containing twenty figures;' over and above the *Samson and Dalilah*, with *its* nine figures; both begun and finished since the autumn, 'from the bare canvas.'

He is 'decreed not only a Victory but a triumph!' And all his pictures 'are starred with admirers.'—'I 'should like you to see them. The New Gallery 'opened at twelve to-day, to the public. Before two, '600 Catalogues were sold. I was there. The people 'poured in like a torrent. The day was fine; and 'the Exhibition looked glorious. * * On *Friday*, 'at one, came the King, in full state, with a long '*cortège*; martial music playing, the Colours pre-'sented, the Guards under arms all along this 'Temple of the Arts.'—'The President and Council 'attended him through the rooms; where he spent 'about two hours. On returning, the King showed 'himself at the Portico, which is elevated. Crowds 'cheered him heartily. The music again struck up. 'The old King bowed, took off his hat, descended to 'his carriage, and departed, amidst the huzzas of

'thousands. The effect was fine, was electric:' the *spectâcle*, of a kind to strike the impressionable Academician.

At this first Exhibition in Trafalgar-Square, the *Sirens*,—the *Dalilah*,—*Adam and Eve at their Orisons*;—*Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, in all made a nobler figure than any appearance of Etty's, since that of the first *Judith*. Four such pictures were enough, one might have fancied, to have silenced any cry of his having 'gone back.' But the Picture-gazing world found nothing out of the way in the display, nothing more than could be paralleled by any popular favourite. It needs the lapse of a few years or generations for that same circle to discover the relation a really gifted man's works bear to those of the men of Talent, who please and astonish at first sight.

Detraction even was not idle as to the *Sirens*. The 'repulsiveness' of some subordinate details,—

'The human bones that whiten all the ground,'—

was much insisted on by a certain class of Critics: whose hearsay dogmas centre in the shallow Eighteenth-century notion of Art as of 'an After-'dinner amusement.' 'Glowing in colour, wonderful 'in execution, but conceived in the worst possible 'taste,' protests one judge, (the *Spectator*). 'A disgust-'ing subject,' shrieks another.—'Who would like to 'have the representation of a charnel-house in his 'apartments?' If the sole aim of a picture be to please, and prove eligible for a lady's drawing-room, these too suggestive dead men's bones *were*, indeed, decidedly objectionable:—not wholly so, perhaps, if a work of

Art may casually take higher ground than that of 'an innocent luxury,' or of adorning rich men's chambers.

Even the partial nudities of the Picture,—those grand kneeling Sirens with outstretched arms,—outraged the veneer modesty of many. 'Fast' young men, pointing to a bare-bosomed Siren, would exclaim, 'How disgusting!' Ladies prepared to be conventionally shocked, could scarcely be persuaded to turn their heads in the direction of the Picture. 'If they had understood the moral,' remarked the Painter, 'they would have felt differently:'—'The 'Wages of Sin is Death.' A clerical friend thought the text might advantageously have been inscribed under the Picture: so as to arrest attention to its real aim, and secure a fair hearing.

The *Sirens* and the *Dalilah* returned to the Painter's Studio unsold. *Mars, Venus, Cupid,* and the *Adam and Eve,* had been painted and paid for in the previous year. Thus far, therefore, a season of high achievement was not an encouraging one: contrary to a recent year, (1835), in which no less than eight Pictures, mostly of medium pretension and size, had all found immediate purchasers.

During the summer months, he engaged in a series of smaller works, graceful in character, and of a more remunerative cast: *Miss Lewis in the Character of a Flower Girl;—Sleeping Nymph;*—&c. Pieces of 'effect' in Form or Colour, painted *con amore;* he threw into them as much of his Art, as into subjects of more ambitious claim. For he

never *manufactured;* was in his slightest performance, so far as it went, the conscientious and impassioned Artist.

The death of Constable was followed by the movement to purchase his *Cornfield* for the National Gallery. A movement, which Etty, one of the comparatively few who then appreciated Constable's Art, joined at an early stage: thinking too, it might 'give 'our Rulers a hint; that if they really wish to patronise 'and foster Fine Art, they must not forget, entirely, 'the flowers that spring up on our own earth.'

The annual ride on the roof of a York Coach, whereof the narrative still continues a staple in Etty's Letters, is this year related withal most graphic effect.—

'The night,'—writing August 27th, (*from the Mount, to his Niece*),—'waned rather faster than I had 'anticipated. The Morning Star appeared;' and 'the 'beautiful Dawn. Gold and amber, scattered in the 'path of the Sun, heralded his approach. And, as 'we entered Stamford, he gilt gratuitously with 'splendid *or-molu* the Spires and Towers of the 'Ancient Churches,—very fine' ones.—To darkness and cold, ensued 'warmth and sunshine;' and to 'breakfast at Grantham,' pleasant hours.—'The 'fields were ripe with harvest. There, stood the rich 'and golden sheaves of corn, ready for carting. The 'pigeons basked on the barn-tops in the sunshine, or 'flew about the farm-yards. The ruddy apples hung 'in clusters on the trees.' And so, 'through scenes 'of peace and fertility that might well gladden the 'heart,' he passed: 'by smiling cottages and farms;'

bowling pleasantly along 'in dreaming, imaginative mood.'

His York home was again a new one, in a quiet court leading out of Blake Street: the house in Marygate of the previous year having been given up. This Blake Street residence proved much to his mind; possessing a good painting-room, from the bow-window of which he looked out on a tranquil court-yard, ivy-covered gables, and 'a noble portion 'of the Minster:'—could even catch the swelling tones of the Organ. Simple pleasures, simple incidents sufficed for Etty.—'I caught a pretty little 'robin,'—he thinks it enough to relate,—'and after 'holding him gently in my hand a minute, he flew 'joyful and chirping away.' Familiar objects, familiar impressions awakened in his mind ever fresh delight. He is content, each year, to note 'how clear the sky 'and glowing sunset from the walls;' how 'beautiful, 'as we were passing the ferry, to look up the River 'reflecting the sunny tints in its waves.' A country-walk will fill his heart: 'to be alone with Nature, 'and listen to the voice that whispers through the 'trees, and speaks unutterable things.'—He looks in 'at half-price at the Old York Theatre:' where he 'saw as a child *Jane Shore* and the *Flitch of Bacon*.' Or, he hears 'the Band play in the Museum Gardens 'several beautiful airs:' 'the weather lovely;'—'the 'brilliant company, the surrounding noble objects,—'Minster, Abbey, Multangular Tower, and land-'scape,—in harmony with the music; and the music 'with them.'

October sees him in Manchester, for a day or two,

hoping to sell a picture. To its Exhibition, he had sent the *Delilah;* for which, *one* offer of a hundred pounds had been refused, to his present remorse. Fated this year, to ill success, he finds it still unsold; begins to fear it will 'stick by him.' A call was made and an evening spent with Daniel Grant, 'one 'of the most benevolent men in Manchester,' the possessor of *Venus and her Doves* commissioned on the Painter's first visit. But 'Trade is bad' this year, the Firm a loser by an odd '£100,000' or so; and Manufacturers 'afraid of Pictures.' The following day, after attending some neighbouring races, Etty dined with Mr. Grant. Over their wine, the Pictures being mentioned, his wealthy host takes it into his head to bid for them: asks 'what he will 'take' for the *Delilah* and the *Sirens* 'in the lump;' not having seen the latter. On his side, the Painter was alarmed for the sale of his pictures, and would fain 'turn them into cash.' 'Thinking,' he tells his Brother, 'by going to the lowest sum, I might tempt 'him, I said £300 for the two,' the original price—and that a nominal one,—of the *Sirens* alone.—£300, the Manufacturer had that morning put in his pocket to risk in the betting-ring, and had lost only £25 of it. Willing to save the remainder and lay it up in a more tangible luxury, he threw down £200, 'in notes,' before the nervous Painter: to whom money in hand was always a temptation. But £200 for two such works, the product of the best hours of one year in the maturity of the Painter's life, in the maturity of his skill and fame, was no irresistible bait even to so

bad a man of business as Etty. 'Another £50' failing to seduce him, the tempter pocketed his ineffectual *notes:* and the Artist already regrets his own obduracy;—'May not have such another offer.' He remorsefully calls to mind his Uncle's aphorism,—'Never refuse money, William!'—counsel, which he had, hitherto, scrupulously borne in mind:—and continued to do so, during years when it was hardly so appropriate. 'A lost occasion gone for ever by,' he fears, this opportunity of securing £250 will prove. On parting from his host late at night, to the latter's abrupt query, 'Will you take the money?' Etty, prepared for an unconditional surrender by previous chagrin, responded with a ready affirmative. The bargain was struck. The Painter retired to his Inn with the £250; and the Manufacturor to his bed, owner, at that easy rate, of Pictures whose intrinsic claim, he was little qualified to apprehend; and of which the mere money value, in 1854, considerably exceeds £2,000. The *Sirens* itself is valued at that sum.

The 'colossal' Picture, however, had not been painted for money. While devoting his best energies to the task, Etty consciously made the world a free gift of his extra labour;—was well aware that its size and aim would lessen, not enhance, the price and marketableness. The sum now accepted he knew to be far less than the lowest he ought, even then, to have received. Still, it was the most he had been offered.—'Better that, than the large Picture rolled up 'and perhaps spoiling on my hands.' A judgement,

which even waking thoughts confirmed; despite a lurking misgiving; and to which he for a time continued steadfast, or tried to do so.

When the great Historic work, purchased before seen, reached its new possessor, its colossal nude Figures, and other peculiarities, proved no desiderata for a Manchester drawing-room. To the Manchester Institution, the picture was, in the first instance, *lent:*—there exhibited in 1838. But in 1839, the Council of that Institution have cause to 'congratulate the 'Governors on the Munificent Donation,' and to celebrate the 'characteristic liberality,' of 'William 'Grant, Esq., of Springside:' to whom, I suppose, the picture had passed from his brother. And thus, a Lancashire Institution found itself the fortunate possessor,—next most so to Edinburgh itself,—of a Picture, one of the noblest, for grandeur of sentiment and glory of execution, Lancashire or England can show, from a modern,—or any other hand. In the *Storm*, it may boast another of Etty's most poetic and earnest works,—of its size and character:—to leaven a somewhat miscellaneous collection of 'Old Masters,' or reputed 'Old Masters,'—public-spirited *donations*, mostly.

I have been informed that a few friends in York, desirous of purchasing the *Sirens*, but imagining the price of so large a picture beyond their pocket, and fearing to offer too little, missed their opportunity; though prepared to go as far as £500. In after years, the blunder which had sentenced one of his *Chef-d'œuvres* to smoky Manchester, instead of urbane and beloved York, came to be a standing topic of regret

with the Painter: in 1849, a difficulty occurring, much to aggravate that regret. Let us hope Manchester will prove the worthier Custodian, as it is certainly, the wider 'sphere of influence.'

At York, while casting a wistful glance towards London and Academy, Etty prolonged his stay far into November; 'in hopes of a job:'—an Altar-piece for a Roman Catholic Chapel in the neighbourhood, for which his friend John Harper, the Architect employed, had hoped to secure him a commission. His predilection for the Catholics,—to which, add his anxiety to secure a sufficiency 'of the needful,' flowing in so reluctantly, this year,—made him unusually solicitous for the commission. Laying himself out to obtain it,—a step he had seldom or never before taken, he prepared Sketches and otherwise bestirred himself.

Such was his 'veneration,' he replied, to a formal question from his friend as to price, 'for that ancient 'and truly poetic religion,'—the Roman Catholic, that were he 'a man of fortune, or of competence 'even, he should esteem the Honour sufficient reward.' As matters stand, he would 'paint the Picture 'for the lowest sum' 'justice to himself and others 'would warrant:' about £300, if the subject chosen required more than two or three figures; £250, if *not* requiring more. The Picture would probably occupy the best hours of an 'entire year.'—It would be to him, 'an opportunity long coveted, of doing 'something for that Faith which has been the means 'of' restoring the 'Arts so dear to my soul; *without* 'which I should hardly think life worth living.

'Architecture, Painting, Music, Sculpture, all owe 'their second existence to the Catholic Faith.' An opportunity also it promised, of practising in accordance with a favourite theory,—a reasonable enough one, justified by the practice of *every* epoch of true Art,—respecting the importance of his Art as an auxiliary to Religion and to Architecture.

Disappointment was the sequel to much suspense and baseless hope. The Patron of the Church in question ultimately did not give the Commission.

The above extract may be accepted, as far as it goes, as a confession of faith on Etty's part,—an Artist's faith. In his letters from abroad of 1816, we heard him talk in orthodox Protestant accents of the 'effigies of Popery' he came across in the Churches; of 'some Popish ceremonies going on:'—&c. Twenty years later, his feelings towards the religion of our forefathers had undergone a change. Growing love for the 'Monuments of Art and of 'piety' they had left behind, exerted the influence it has had on so many in our time. And in 1836, he declares himself, to a lady who had taken him to task for his heterodox leanings, 'in his heart's core deeply 'and sincerely of the Ancient Faith,—*Catholic*:—not 'of the Daniel O'Connell school, but that of Alfred, 'St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Bruno, and Fénélon; '—not forgetting Raphael, Michæl Angelo, and a host 'of other great and good men.' 'Rubens a Catholic, 'too,' he adds.—'Though in some respects of opposite 'faith,'—his correspondent being a rigid Protestant,—'we agree,' thinks he, in the 'vital and essential 'points of Christianity.' He '*endeavours* to be a

'Christian;' and, never obtruding his belief on others 'conceiving they have a right to think for themselves,' (not precisely, a Romanist sentiment), asks 'the same 'charitable thinking' for himself.

To his Brother, he explains, at a later date:—'I am '*not* a' (Roman) 'Catholic, nor probably ever shall be; 'unless they get their own Cathedrals back again. 'Nor have I any wish to convert *you* to that Faith. 'But I am, and trust ever shall be, an advocate for '*truth and justice*, in opposition to cant and charla- 'tanry. *As such*,' he challenges 'denial of the facts:— 'That we are indebted to the' (Roman) 'Catholics for 'most that is great or good, our ancestors have handed 'down to us. * * For the introduction of Chris- 'tianity into Britain. * * For our laws. * * 'For all that is great in Ancient Architecture, 'Painting, Music, in Christian Europe.'—

'That they were, in this country, vilified, robbed 'of their possessions, and just rights as Englishmen; 'in many cases murdered, expatriated, turned out 'of their holy places:'—&c. &c. 'Protestant *justice* 'must now add insult, falsehood, abuse, calumny.'—Etc.

As late as 1847, I find him applying to a learned brother Artist, putting the query, 'whether, in *his* 'opinion, the Roman Catholic, or Protestant Faith, 'is better adapted for promoting the happiness and 'best interests of the human race?' His friend replies orthodoxly, in favour of the latter: admitting, however, that 'the *Arts*' have,—in Past, not present time,—most flourished under the inspiration and 'dignified encouragement' of the former.

An anecdote, with which Mr. Maclise has furnished me, illustrates the respect Etty cherished for the elder Church.—'I know not,' writes the latter, 'if it be 'worth while to tell, as exemplar of the religious feel-'ing of Etty, that he drew me aside to remonstrate 'against my having introduced a group of Monks, 'engaged in rather a convivial manner at the board, 'in an early picture of mine, called *The Bow of the* '*Peacock*. He was both serious and severe with me 'for this.'

His sympathies were all with the religion of the Old Times, with the builders of York and Westminster, the Painters of the Vatican, of the Sistine, and of the Palaces of Venice.—'Oh, that I could 'have seen my Country,' he will exclaim, in his letters to his Niece, 'when her brows were crowned with 'gems, like what our Abbeys, our Cathedrals, and 'Churches once were! When schism had not split 'the Christian world into fighting and disputing 'fanatics; when the dignity of Christ's holy temple 'and of his worship were thought improved by 'making the Fine Arts handmaids thereto; and the 'finest efforts of the soul of man were made sub-'servient to His glory.'

Small was the love Etty bore towards such, as for a Church 'build up a Box of Brick, make a hole to 'get in, and two or three others to let in the light.' 'No!' The men who could raise structures like York 'Minster,' declares the Painter to a friend; 'who 'could apply the best, the most glorious of Arts to 'the service, honour, and glory of Him who made 'and sustains us, and,—by *thus* applying them, and

'drawing nearer to Him in prayer and praise,—soften, 'sweeten, ameliorate the ruggedness, selfishness, and 'barbarity of our nature:'—'the men who could 'do this, could do what the Roman Catholics have 'done, come nearest to my feelings of what a Chris- 'tian should be.' And this, 'whatever corruptions 'might have crept into their worship. For into what 'human Institutions will not error creep!'

The tendency was, with Etty, one of sentiment. An amateur Romanist, like many of his temperament, he now and then attended Mass for the Music's sake. He read with much gusto in the 'Ages of Faith:'—mourned over our ruined Abbeys, for the Architecture's sake, and the peaceful seclusion of those 'vanished asylums of piety.' He delighted to anathematize 'the Spoilers of God's 'Holy Temple,' and to execrate the memory of Henry VIII.:—in his Almanac appending, as occasion offers, disparaging epithets over against the elsewhere honoured names of Luther, Calvin, Elizabeth, William III., and the like '*ultra* Protestants;' excited again, by that unpardonable destruction of the beautiful Monasteries, and primed with the new versions of History current among certain cliques. In his bed-room, he set up a very pretty *dilettante Altar*, as described in a letter already quoted. He loved, in fact, to indulge in a little innocent make-believe; to fancy himself a 'good 'Catholic' in the past, if not in the present. The Taste went no further. To clerical and other esteemed friends, when, in later years, rating him for his Romanist tendencies, and prophesying he would

turn Papist: 'Never, never!' he would cry,—'as long as you possess York Minster or West-'minster Abbey.'—'I shall live and die a Protestant. 'I love my native Church,—the Church of my Bap-'tism:'—Etc. Though his enthusiasm was kindled for the Ancient Church as the Patron of Art,—in Mediæval times, *all* classes were 'Patrons of 'Art,'—he was not, he confided to a Protestant friend, taking notice of his crucifixes, &c., to 'be 'led away by its tom-fooleries.' With Pugin, Herbert, and others of the same way of thinking, dining at his table, he would join in their scarcely ambiguous toast of 'the Church!' But despite his close intimacy with such fervent converts to Mediæval creeds as well as Mediæval Art, he to the last, continued a (more or less) dutiful member of the Church 'as by Law Established.'

To the disappointment last mentioned, in the matter of the Altar-piece, succeeded, while Etty was still in York, a week of 'suspense and alarm, sleep-'less nights, and agitated days;' caused by a threatened settlement in life of his Niece and now indispensable companion. The Painter's abrupt return to Town, in a state of great excitement, alone put a period to his uncertainties. Soon succeeding in persuading her still to rely on *his* arm for support and protection, he became as much agitated the other way,—as vehement in delight as before with apprehension. It was 'as if a weight of a thousand tons 'had been taken off his mind.' Existence 'began 'to feel like a delicious dream,' contrasted with 'previous wretchedness.'

After the trying tasks, and unremunerative, of the past season, a succession of minor works continued to hold possession of Etty's Studio,—minor in size, at least, and in subject miscellaneous: the *Good Samaritan;*—Study of *A Black-haired Girl with Poppies;* &c.

That Etty was not *always* painting grand Historic Pictures, was very much his own fault, to judge from the letters of one admirer. Had his head been empty of such subjects, he had a zealous friend ever ready to supply the want: a correspondent, anonymous in the first instance, and self-introduced, who, for some ten years, was incessantly urging his own conceptions on Etty, and the right way of treating them; regardless of the fact that Etty was, and he was not a *Painter*, and that these obliging proffers were never adopted. Europas, Ledas, Allegories, Births of Venus, Births of Jupiter; *Edwin's Interview with the Hermit*, from Mason; *Venus and the Graces*, from Canning; Savage's *Morning;* Prior's *Ramilies*, (or "Triumph of the British Arms"); are a few samples from this gentleman's lavish supply of 'pleasing and appropriate' subjects: communicated in batches of six or eight at a time, with accompanying quotations transcribed. Themes these, he never wearies of reiterating in Etty's ear, or of hoping 'to see in the next Exhibition:' themes which are to bring the Painter incalculable 'increase of fame' and of Patrons. One of this voluntary counsellor's ruling ideas was, that it would vastly advantage Etty's Pictures were he to select *ladies of quality* as his models:—for as much of their persons as they

would consent to display. In default of the *originals*, Etty might even,—believes his adviser,—profitably resort to *engraved portraits* of such Court beauties. In fact, the kind fellow was continually calling to mind *some* engraving, picture, cast, quotation, book, or female acquaintance, which or who will be 'of ser-'vice' to Etty,—not to say the making of him;—or some friend, with whose opinions on Art it is important for the Painter to make himself acquainted. He complains of our Artist's 'idleness' in not painting some dozen great Historic works in the year; much objects to the 'subjectlessness' of his minor works; and takes great credit to himself for 'spur-'ring' him on to exertion.

Etty endured his gratuitous adviser with incredible patience and good humour, unexampled in a man of his standing: a good humour, which invited such trespasses, in fact. He had even a kindness for his talkative friend; and granted him many privileges. To no other Painter of his power could similar things have happened. In him, however, there was nothing of the *Noli me tangere*. He was pleased with the admiration, and stayed not to weigh it; quietly let the rest go by: taking particular care to follow none but his own counsels.

Some of the unsolicited advice to which he was in his time exposed, was of a less innocent character. An anonymous note, in the Summer of 1836, purporting to proceed from an individual who had 'in-'herited' an Etty,—once even 'bought' an Etty,—acquaints the Painter, this doubly privileged person had intended purchasing *another*, from the Academy-

Exhibition of 1836. But those bearing the Academician's name were all, (*Family of the Forests, —Psyche and Venus,—Venus and her Doves*), too 'slight in subject and in execution,' to satisfy so accomplished a critic. And he had been forced to invest his money in more promising quarters. Which catastrophe supplies an occasion for warning the offending Painter, that, if continuing to produce works of that calibre, he must 'rest satisfied with a lower class of 'Patrons, a smaller amount of price, and an inferior 'degree of reputation.'

In the succeeding year, (1837), *another* anonymous Mentor favours Etty with his gratuitous dicta: which, he hopes, will '*not*' be considered an intrusion. An Amateur, a Collector,—also he takes care to inform the Painter, a victim of 'hereditary and almost per-'manent gout,'—he harangues the Painter in authoritative tone; but qualifies his warnings: finds *something* to approve, though much to condemn. Etty's works, according to this oracle, are unequal, 'con-'tradictory:'—not all, in fact, great guns. The *Sirens*, the *Samson*, the *Psyche*, are 'Historical;'—therefore, worthy of his 'standing in the Academy.' But '*Doves and Venus;—Man, Woman, and Child of the* '*Woods*, (a sort of Irish huddle); *Mars and Venus*, 'are platitudes.' *Adam and Eve*, the old gentleman looked for, but 'could not find;' though 'some of 'his friends did.' He begs Etty to avoid 'plati-'tudes.' Great Painters should paint great works. What would Homer, Virgil, Milton, have been, but for their *subjects?* Etty should always be painting great subjects, and always 'fascinating ones,'—the

chief 'secret of selection.'—'Fascination has a most 'powerful effect on every one,—in particular, pur-'chasers.' The 'Standard Authors of every country' are recommended to his attention; 'especially Ovid 'in his *Metamorphoses*.'—Thus, the ponderous old gentleman, with singular modesty.

Anonymous friends seem in a conspiracy to set the Painter right. At the close of this same year, a 'Patron of Art congratulates' him on the sale of the *Sirens*. 'A Patron of Art' thinks 'the sale of so 'large a Picture a trophy in the annals of British 'Art;' at the same time, suggests his painting 'gratifying subjects in easy attitudes:' as the step to place him 'at the head of the Painters of Great 'Britain.'

Besides advisers, Etty had his train of Picture-mendicants, and other strange applicants. One slight Scottish acquaintance, and 'ardent admirer' of Art, forwards unasked, a Picture neither he nor Etty wants: in *exchange* for which he prays the Painter to give him one of his own. The 'masterly 'sketch,' on which this admirer had set his heart, turned out to be a copy of Reynolds's *Dido*: a great favourite, as I have said, with Etty. Ultimately, the Painter *did* execute a second copy to give his indefatigable correspondent: applying, even, for a sight of the Original in the Royal Collection, that he might make the Copy as good as his first.

One gentleman, introduced by a *bonâ fide* Patron, is desirous of purchasing a Picture from Etty's hand, but, being a family man, would not think himself 'justified' in disbursing more than £25, (would keep

the price a secret); nor, in exhibiting before his wife and nine children,—including 'three grown-up 'daughters,'—such a Picture as *Nymph and Faun Dancing*. 'An elegant female figure, with bare shoul-'ders' only, 'and *perhaps one side* of her bosom bare,' —'thence draped to the middle of the thigh:' *that* would be a Picture a decorous Patriarch could suspend in his drawing-room, fearless of results.

An unknown applicant entreats him, through a mutual acquaintance, to fill a favourite frame, 23 in. by 15; and,—nothing being found to fit *that*,—despatches a piece of Church Oak, '200 years old,' whereon Etty is 'to place something of his hand and 'mind.' By dint of assiduous dunning,—for he would not take an answer,—the modest applicant did, in the end, conjure a Picture from the harassed Painter, for dear Peace' sake.

On another occasion, he was advised to deal similarly by an eulogistic Critic,—who *talked* of buying, and might have talked still longer of paying:—and to save himself harmless from his friend, by *giving* him a Study outright. Nor was it an unusual thing for some Student, otherwise unknown to him, or—only, perhaps, as previously befriended,—whose ambition it is to 'shine in his profession,'—and to possess something of Etty's painting,—to besiege him accordingly, with letters, begging the gift of a Study.

Sometimes again, an utter stranger will send, ('carriage paid'), a damaged Old Picture, of doubtful authorship: for the Painter to 'repair,'—and 'make 'his charge.'

CHAPTER XXI.

STILL MERIDIAN. 1838-39. (ÆT. 51-52.)

Misappreciated—Familiar—Growing Productiveness—The *Sirens* Again: Repairs—Portrait-Tasks—A York Worthy—A York School of Art—Lecture in its Behalf—Givendale—More Innovation—'Eleanor Scudamore'—The *Rape of Proserpine*—The *Lady Mayoress*—Etty's Portraits—Study and Experiment—York-Walls: Breaches and Renewals—*Joan of Arc* first Conceived—Cause for Rejoicing.

JANUARY, 1838, *The Prodigal* 'in the Depth of his 'Misery,—"I will arise and go to my Father," '—small in size, but not, in significance, was commenced. At the British Institution, *The Good Samaritan* roused the same cry of 'unpleasing' as the *Sirens* had done before. He remained still, comparatively unvalued: at Fifty-one, and after having painted many of the noblest works the English School can show. He was even less appreciated, if anything, than he had been. We have seen the prices commanded by the Master-pieces of the last year. At a Picture Auction in 1838, an earlier *chef-d'œuvre, The Judgement of Paris* of 1826, which its possessors had so long been unavailingly desirous to dispose of, proved still a drug in the Market: selling at a discount instead of a premium,—as was soon to be the rule with his works. It had, in fact, to be *bought-in* for £230,—less than half price; while ten years later commanding £1,000. It was the *same picture* all the time.

A letter to his friends the Bulmers, admits us to the Painter's Studio, and his meditations during the close of the busy season in 1838.—

'How often I think of the *Mount*,' he exclaims, (*March 25th*), 'your quiet and peaceful enjoyment 'there.' * * 'Dear Old York would not be like 'herself without you:'—'if knocking at the door 'that opened almost of itself to receive me, a vacant, 'staring domestic should answer to my anxious 'inquiries,—"No such persons here, Sir!"—Yet 'so 'twill be, and with all of us. The sun will shine 'on still: our places filled by strangers, our names 'almost forgotten.' * * The 'bells will still ring 'on: those of Bishophill and the Minster too. 'Well! never mind! So long as we keep good 'accounts above; leave a good odour behind us;— 'and try to do some good in our generation. Then, 'shall we go where suns shine that shine not on 'sorrow, nor set in sadness; where'—

April 2nd.—'My Gothic Clock is still ticking,'— 'a little Gothic Clock at my right hand.' But 'another week has glided into eternity since I wrote 'the preceding; and I have not found time to finish. 'Seven children, alias Pictures, calling for attention 'have prevented me: small children, not Goliahs. 'But small children make a great crying sometimes, 'as you know; and must be attended to, to keep the 'peace and quietness of the house. So must mine.' * *

'I send in my labours on the 10th, Tuesday. And 'when my bairns are gone, *I* also shall be a gentle- 'man, *not*—a hangman this year: though not entirely 'out of the mess, being on the Council.

'Now Flora's reign is beginning. Snowdrops and 'crocuses, and "primrose pale," 'that take the 'winds of March with beauty," harbinger the more 'splendid works of Nature.' * * 'Covent Garden 'is becoming interesting: flowers of all kinds bloom-'ing, and put up in paper posies to tempt the lover 'to spend half-a-crown or a shilling.'

Of this year's contributions to the Academy, the Picture of most intrinsic importance, and which attracted most attention, the *Prodigal Son* 'in the 'depth of his misery,' is also one of the most noticeable ever painted by Etty, for the rare qualities of sentiment and expression attained in it. It was bought by Mr. Beckford, who so highly valued it, it is said, he tied it up as an heirloom.

Very dissimilar in aim was the *Bivouac of Cupid and his Company*, one of those Pictures wherein the success wont to attend his hand is of a kind peculiar to himself. The fabled Age of Gold he in these summons back. In this ideal world of his, groups of fair women, more or less indifferent to drapery, carelessly repose with really enviable composure, under the blue sky, on the green lawns, or in sylvan seclusion, beneath the high embowered roof of wide-stretching oaks.

Three other minor works were the already mentioned *Miss Lewis as a Flower Girl;* the 'Black-haired Girl with Poppies' of his Diary, transformed into the *Bacchante and Boy Dancing* of the Academy-Catalogue; and *Somnolency*,—a sleeping female figure, very remarkable as a study of light and shade. Equally heterodox, in the sense of having appended

to it no poetic or 'historic' label, was *Il Duetto*, the bright Group in gay Venetian costume now in the Vernon Gallery: a Picture in progress as far back as 1834. The large number of seven was completed by the *Converted Jew*,—as a study of a Model's head was less sensibly named:—called *out* of its name, that is, in obedience to the absurd necessity entailed by the Catalogue-system, of christening the intrinsically nameless, works—justly forming a numerous class with the Painter, as in another way with the Poet,—incapable of any truthful title beyond the vague and wearisome one, 'Study.' Such Studies of Nature convey their own meaning,—one falsified by the attempt to make it more definite, to translate it verbally.

Of the seven Pictures, three returned from the Academy unsold, destined to long wanderings up and down the Provincial Exhibitions.

The Summer's labours were varied by a visit to Birmingham, paid from a characteristic motive: to witness the ceremonial opening of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary Oscott, in which his Romanist friends were personally interested; Etty being entertained under the roof of the 'Venerable the 'Master' of the College.

September's outside ride to York produces the customary history of it: (*to Mr. Bodley*). He tells how, starting as usual at evening, 'Nature gradually 'drew her gauze veil over the pleasant fields, hills, 'trees, and smiling cottages; till twilight succeeded 'sunshine, and darkness followed that. Then shone 'the fires and light in the labourer's cottage, and

'illumined the glad interior;—glimmered in the 'little upper casement:—and then, all was quiet. 'Clouds veiled the moon and stars. And a gentle 'sprinkling of rain freshened the fields.'

The delights of the country stir the released Londoner's enthusiasm. 'Beautiful,' he finds 'the ver-'dant face of Nature; fresh the breeze; tranquil the 'river; gay with flowers! What sweet sensations 'are inspired,' &c.—'"He is still," you will say, dear 'Thomas, "the fond enthusiastic Painter." So I 'am:—and so must ever be. When I lose my admira-'tion of what is grand or beautiful, in Nature and 'her Great Creator, let me die the death.'

On visiting Manchester and Liverpool, to look after his Pictures in the Exhibitions, his pains were rewarded by no commissions, no announcement of sales. On the other hand, considerable labour and anxiety were incurred, in repairing and retouching the *Sirens;* which had fared ill in removals by incompetent hands. For the 'ground' of Etty's Pictures was always 'somewhat different in texture to 'the usual:' requiring, in the case of his larger canvases, special care,—and familiarity with his works—in those handling them. Parts of this particular Picture accidentally possessed further peculiarities, still less favourable.—'At a certain period of its 'painting,' Etty subsequently relates, 'when I was 'laying in the *Chiaro-scuro*, or light and shadow, I 'had unluckily used in some of the dark parts, a too 'strong gluten or size with the colour, *in tempera.* 'This, when the Picture was removed, caused por-'tions of it to drop and peel off: but only *partially,*

'under the Picture, and not in the most important 'features of it.' Peculiarities, of which we shall hear again, as a source of difficulty and vexation to the Painter.

It was not till the close of the year, that more Pictures were settled in life: *Somnolency* at Liverpool, selling for £45; *The Converted Jew* at Birmingham, for £60,—through the help of a lottery, a *second* one. At the first, other Pictures had been preferred.

At York, the lodgings of the previous year in 'Strickland's-Court' were made still more acceptable to Etty by the companionship of his Niece. Thence, (*October 26th*), he reports to his Brother Walter, a climax 'of business and bustle, balls, and belles, 'and beaux; soldiers; supper in the Old Gothic 'Guild Hall.' The latter, 'a really unique spectacle: 'supper for four hundred and fifty, in a Hall like a 'Feudal Chieftain's: with the light shining on the 'rafters, and grotesque grinning heads putting out 'their tongues at the fine ladies below.'—'Gay and 'gallant sights' abound.. * * 'Lord de Grey's Troop 'leaves to-morrow;' and 'York will have time to sub-'side into sobriety.—We went at half price on Wed-'nesday, to the old Theatre, the cradle of so many emi-'nent in the histrionic art. A good house, patronised 'by the Lord and Lady Mayoress,' (Hudson).

'Over head and ears in business,' he paints John 'Brook and said 'Lady Mayoress;' paints Walmgate Bar,—two Pictures, from within the Walls and with-out. And he studies from 'cream-coloured horses, 'with reference to a future effort:'—*The Pluto and Proserpine.*

The portrait of his old friend, John Brook—a York worthy,—was executed for a Musical Club whereof the Lawyer was senior Member. Undertaken after years of intimacy with his 'subject,' it was painted with the same painstaking and study, as if his sitter had been a stranger: attested by such entries in his Diary as, (*October 9th*), 'Went to John Brook, and 'studied his character.' Similar precautions are not always esteemed necessary by portrait-painters. The result was a masculine piece of painting, a bold and characteristic record of a quaint and strongly marked face; to which the genuine and admirable character of the man lends interest of another kind. A copy of it, assisted by additional sittings, was made by Etty this same autumn, for Mr. Brook's family.

From one of these, subsequently appeared an engraving (by Wass),—much to the delight of the upright Lawyer:—an engraving bought by half York, where, and within even a wider circle, he was greatly honoured. He had won respect from Judge, Counsel, Client:—from the young men educated in his office, feelings of enthusiastic devotion. 'Honest John Brook,'—the enviable title of honour, universally accorded, was worthy of all the pains the Painter could bestow: a man famed for indifference to money, for public spirit, and private generosity,—for readiness to assist, with counsel and with money; an Attorney, who, made up as many differences as he brought into Court,—gave more advice, and managed more business *without* charge, than with. Valued for the soundness of his judgment no less than for his probity, he was wont to be called in as friend

and arbiter in numberless family matters;—at last, was overwhelmed with executorships, and business not his own. After enjoying a large practice, which had been larger had he not been fastidious to pick and choose, and which was ultimately injured by habits of procrastination, he died poor: leaving behind him, the few thousands wherewith he began life, instead of the hundred thousand, people fancied he might have accumulated, had he been less honest, or less generous. Between the Painter and the Lawyer a friendship had long existed, cemented by a common love for 'the Olden Time,' among other similarities of feeling.

Beside Portrait-painting and Sketching, Etty found an employment not so strictly professional to engross his time during the Autumn vacation of 1838. This was the preparation of a Paper on the 'Importance 'of the Arts of Design,' he had promised to read at the 'Philosophical Society:' in support of a scheme then afloat, for 'establishing a School of Drawing, 'and Exhibition Room, on Manor Shore.' To a 'number of young men connected with Masonry, 'the Minster, and Manufactures,' such a School 'would be a real benefit.' And, thinks Etty, 'the 'place which produced Flaxman, and Stothard, (who 'was of Yorkshire breed), two of the first Designers 'of our Country,' ought to have such a School.'

The Lecture on the Arts was read,—by 'our 'talented fellow-citizen,' as the local News-writers delight to call the great Painter. The proposal it was intended to forward, fell to the ground:—in its original form, that is. No School of Art was set on

foot, till the establishment, through Etty's means, of the Government School of Design, three years later. No York Exhibition was ever established on a regular footing; nor Gallery of pictures attempted.

The ancient and well-preserved *Hospitium*,—or Refectory for poor Pilgrims,—a separate out-building of St. Mary's Abbey, is an architectural example from the Fourteenth Century, in a rare and interesting class; another occurring at Kenilworth: a ground-story of stone, supporting a superstruction of timber. Together with the ruinous remnants of the Conventual Church itself, it is now comprised within the pleasure-grounds of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. Some of the Members of the Society,—among whom Professor Phillips, the accomplished and genial Geologist, was an influential agitator in the good cause,—hoped, by discovering a *use* for the Hospitium, to preserve it. A use,—and a still more appropriate one,—was afterwards found, as a Museum of Antiquities: one including many precious waifs from the neighbouring ruins of St. Mary. To which end, it was restored,—and, (I believe), conscientiously. Thanks to the enlightened leaders of the Yorkshire Institution, who have made a consistent stand against the destructive propensities of the York citizens, these 'Museum Gardens' by the river Ouse, with their various, and scrupulously preserved Antiquities, form one of the most agreeable scenes of the kind in England, and one of the most satisfactory: if we can be brought to forgive the discord created by the interpolation of a would-be Doric Temple,—the 'purely classic' Institution itself; also,

a little child's play in scattering Gothic mouldings, &c., from St. Mary's, about the garden-walks, in the style of a Cockney tea-garden,—exposed to the weather and the capricious clemency of visitors and children.

To the delivery of Etty's Lecture before the Council of the Society, ensued, 'by request,' its repetition early in November, before the wider public of *Members* and others. In spite of a bad delivery, —for the Painter *read*, and with hesitation, too low also, as do most novices in the lecturing art, for more than a fraction of his audience to catch his words,— the Paper made a good impression; and a better when it came to be printed. Like the fragment of *Autobiography*,—ten years later in date,—it was written freely; being the embodiment of knowledge and opinions which had floated in his mind for years. Like the *Autobiography*, too, it is imbued by power and graphic spirit, such as his private Letters would not always lead one to anticipate: a consequence, doubtless, of its being the expression of matter matured by time. Picturesque in style, the Lecture abounds with vivid, felicitous reminiscences of what he had seen in Italy and elsewhere: of some whereof we have variations in the *Autobiography*. The writing of a man of original character, who, after attaining success in his own walk, experiments in words as an exceptional mode of conveying his thought or knowledge, has often this enviable freshness and picturesqueness. The unconventional *spirit*, even while,—as in Etty's case,—he relies with emphasis on hackneyed phrase and overworn quotation, more than atones for slightly illogical or even

ungrammatical wording. In such writing, *sincere*, characteristic, transparent,—not wholly vague and unmeaning,—impressions from things *are* conveyed: so rare a phenomenon, amid the exemplary commonplace of ordinary men. In his Conversation and Correspondence, Etty seldom or never took the pains to show himself out of dishabille,—other than the merest sloven, rather: though in the Letters, occasionally, random hints occur of the wish and power for graphic suggestion of what fell under his eye. In his printed brochures he *tried* to do better, and succeeded. For neither good letter nor deed has yet been achieved without endeavour.

Not a little proud of his literary achievement, Etty dispersed far and wide, among his friends, Copies of it, as reported at length in the York Newspapers.

A Letter to his brother Walter, (*Nov.* 15*th*), announces, as sequel to the plea put in for York Antiquities in his Lecture: that 'the Lord Mayor has 'pledged himself the Walls shall be finished, the 'Barbican and Bar' (Walmgate) 'preserved. I 'dine with him and a few friends to-morrow;'—'dined with the new Sheriff yesterday, and, the day 'after my Essay was read, with his Grace the Arch-'bishop at Bishopthorpe.' The Painter and his companion 'are going to the Concert to-night.' Duty and pleasure detain him in York till 'the fogs and 'frosts have set in—his bitter enemies;' entailing as usual, 'severe cold and teasing cough.' Despite which, before Yorkshire was forsaken, a day's visit was paid to Barmby Moor, to see a Clerical Nephew;

thence to Givendale: a spot afterwards to become so much a favourite with Etty.

'To Givendale, Mr. Singleton's residence, on the 'brow of the Wolds, I was driven,' he relates, (*Nov. 26th, to his Brother*), on 'a day, fine, though frosty 'and cold: through Pocklington, at my request. The 'Beck, the School House, in which I first imbibed 'Master Hall's lessons, the Water Mill, and Tanyard 'opposite, are no longer to be seen: like old friends, 'swept from the face of the earth. The Church 'stands where it did. And some places are as they 'were. But poor John Calverley, the ingenious, plan-'ning, and benevolent Uncle Calverley, is not there. 'We gradually rose in the world till we got upon the 'Wold. * * Mr. Singleton welcomed me. I had 'made my arrangements to go to Hull, and con-'tented myself with taking dinner with him. * * 'When the cloth was removed, the decanters and 'glasses were doubled by the dark, well-rubbed 'mahogany table: things I only see in Yorkshire;— 'old-fashioned habits of housewifery and industry, 'now fast exploding. I sat beside one of his 'daughters, a very pretty girl, with a beautiful ex-'pression. Talking to her, I almost forgot my cold 'and cough. An old Church is embedded in the 'valley; in which an ancient Saxon Arch pleads for 'its antiquity, and tells of days that are gone.—A 'fine old Reynard had made a bad Saturday night's 'work of it, and was prevented enjoying this fine 'Sunday, by getting into a trap set for rabbits. This 'country you would like: wild, hilly, and command-

'ing a view of magnificent extent over the Vale of 'York;—the smoke of Pocklington rising around the 'old Tower of the Church in the Sunshine; the far 'distant hills enclosing a circle of vision most exten- 'sive and grand.'

An 'iniquitous project for selling the *Strays* of 'York,'—open pastures, the property of York City,—excites him to attend a meeting in opposition, before leaving York; and after his return to London, in December draws him, nothing loth, into type. Familiar from the days 'when, as a boy, I used to 'drive Father's cows there,' bound up with the associations of years, these 'Strays' had, like all other long-accustomed things, won a place in his affections. 'Knavesmire, one of the great ornaments and attrac- 'tions of York,'—he expostulates from Buckingham Street,—'bounded on the South by its dark wood, 'spreading its noble expanse for miles, unbroken by 'hedges, the eye steals over it with delight. * * 'To lose this, to make it a thing of shreds and 'patches, would, indeed, be an irreparable loss.'

It was Etty's lot through life to act the part of a more or less ineffectual remonstrant against civic innovation. The triumphant Letter in behalf of the 'Strays,' was followed by one bewailing the Railway-breach in York's 'sacred Walls,'—so lately restored: —an act for which the omnipotent Parliamentary sanction had been obtained unknown to him. The first intelligence of such destructive powers is generally conveyed by the destruction itself. The *détour* made by the Railway to effect this dashing entrance into the centre of York and back, has been since

admitted to have been gratuitous: uncalled for by the exigencies of the compact and quiet little City.

During the winter of 1838-9, illness and death were unusually busy in the circle of Etty's friends. The casual death even of a mere acquaintance always made its impression on one so sensitive to outward influences.

'My poor friend Cottingham,' he tells Mr. Bodley, (*Feb. 3rd,* 1839), 'for whom I have a sincere 'regard, has been at death's door; and narrowly 'escaped being pulled in. He yet continues very 'weak, but I trust is recovering, though slowly. 'The veteran Sir William Beechey died last week, 'at the advanced age of eighty-six. Lonsdale, the 'Artist, was also buried last week. He lived in the 'house of Opie, the house I went to with the letter 'of introduction you got me from Sharp. * * 'William Jay, poor fellow, went out to the Mau-'ritius, took a bilious fever, and died; leaving a wife 'and children. His father, Mr. Jay, of Bath, used 'to say, "What a dying world it is!" * * 'You 'like my Sketches: I have sent you one in black 'and white.'

In this 'Sketch from Nature,' (*à la* Mackenzie), he, under the fictitious title of 'Eleanor Scudamore,' and with a few fictitious adjuncts, paints a real scene, and embodies emotions excited by the sudden death of a young girl known to him

'Eleanor Scudamore, (F—n),' he describes as 'the only child of her widowed Mother;' dwells on her 'amiable and affectionate disposition;' 'unaf-'fected piety;' and on her last illness, 'brought on

'mainly by unremitting attentions in the sick-room 'of her mother.' * *

'In figure graceful, inclining to the tall; she wore 'her hair, (profuse and beautiful), in ringlets falling 'on her shoulders;' reminding 'you of some of the 'early portraits of Raphael when a youth: the same 'gentleness, and amenity of expression.'—

'She had made great proficiency in Music. It 'was melancholy to see the vacant instrument when 'she who had so often awakened its sweetness was 'asleep in death.'—

* * '"Would you like to see her?" said her poor 'mother. The servant took a light, and led the way 'up a narrow staircase. Tread softly, thought I: ''tis the chamber of death. * * Serenely she 'seems to sleep. Silent, solemn is this sight! A 'sweet calm is shed over her youthful countenance: 'which says, in language not to be understood,—"I 'am at peace with myself, with the world I have left, 'with my Maker, and that which is to come." I 'thought of that expression of Shakespeare's,

'"The sleeping and the dead are but as Pictures."

'As the light fell on her beautifully formed nose 'and pale, pale cheek, leaving her closed eyes in 'broad but delicate shadow,' the face seemed 'carved 'in monumental marble. Her lips, like a full-'coloured but faded rose-leaf, were closed with a 'placid smile. The hallelujahs I had heard that 'afternoon beautifully sung in Westminster Abbey, 'still vibrated on my ears. And I fancied I saw her 'enter her heavenly home. * *

'The morning of the day she was buried, the sun 'shone as gaily as if it were a holiday. And one, I 'have no doubt, it was to Eleanor.'—'As I had 'felt an uncommon interest in this sad event, and 'knew the hour of her funeral, I stole into a corner 'of the Church. It was near the close of day. The 'sun shed a parting, golden ray of glory. The hearse 'drove up. The coffin, plumes, and pall darkened the 'doorway: the venerable Ecclesiastic, as he preceded 'it, repeating that blessed promise of our Redeemer,' —&c. 'The Service proceeded. All know how affecting 'that Service is. *, * The white and silvered orna- 'ments' of the coffin 'glittered for the last time in 'the eye, as lowered into the dark arched door of 'the vault: and we saw it no more.'—

The October sketches at York of 'cream-coloured 'Horses,' were,—the Diary shows,—followed up, (*Jan. 7th*, 1839), by the commencement, in charcoal of the *Rape of Proserpine*. Further indefatigable Study of Horses succeeded:—Sketching of Horse Anatomy, journeys with palette and brush to the Wharf of his City-friend, Wood; often-repeated 'sittings or, rather, standings,' both there and at home, on the part of two or three noble animals, pie-bald, and coal black. The Diary records various vicissitudes in this Study of Horses. One day, 'Horses disap- 'pointed me.' Another, 'Horses would not wait:'—on others, however, 'good sitting of Horses.' The Picture engrossed most of his time and energies for the ensuing three months. *March 15th*, we have the reassuring entry in his Diary,—'Got on altogether 'famously, for which I desire to be thankful to

'Almighty God.' In *April*, purchases are made in Covent Garden, of Flowers, Grass, Sedges, Moss. And these final details, together with sky and background, are 'touched in.'

The subject had been selected deliberately, as usual with Etty: his choice, the offspring not of a casual fancy, but of musing and imaginative hours, of the higher moods leavening the labours of busy years. The mature conception had lain and fructified in his mind. In 1834, we first heard of it. In a letter of 1835 to Mr. Colls, from which I have before quoted, he had definitely confided the cherished idea.

'There is a subject,' he then acknowledged, 'I 'hope to paint, before I am much older,—after my own 'heart, and I think of your sort. This to be strictly '*entre nous*. * * One does not like to be antici-'pated: as I *have*' been; 'others painting a subject 'we have set our heart on doing.'

'It is one I have often thought on, lately indeed, '(in 1835, that is), composed *en groupe: Pluto carry-'ing off Proserpine*,—or, as it is commonly called, 'the "Rape of Proserpine:"—

> '"In that fair field of Euna gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
> Was gathered."'

To Etty, an enticing subject. '*There*, are beauty, 'action, masculine vigour;—landscape, sky, motion, 'agitation, flowers, and freshness;—the consternation 'of her attendant Nymphs scattering their flowers 'in their fear and flight:' in fine, 'matter enough to 'make a fine Picture.'

The Painter's intuition was a sure one; the subject

essentially pictorial. Haunting the dreams of poets, it yet had not been elaborated into written Pictures. The lines of Milton are rich in suggestion: no more. 'On that hint' Etty painted, producing one of the noblest Poems which ever glowed on canvas: a lyric burst of mute eloquence, imaginative in the deeper sense of the word; and musical in expression, as in conception vital. The movement is instant and complete. The action of the story was *seen* by the inward eye of the Painter, not put together by the outward: the truthful *statement* of his conception,—not the conception itself,—helped by Models, and studies from the *Life*, from horse, and flower, and sky.

In the painting of his accessories,—as the whole series of his works from *Cleopatra* to *Joan of Arc* exemplifies,—Etty leant rather to the nobler freedom of the elder Masters than the feeble archæologicalness of the Moderns. He did not paint in awe of anachronisms. Such an one,—a slight instance,—we have here, in a pretty flower-basket he has introduced: of which the original was one a lady-friend used for her needlework. With this anomalous basket, prudent friends, a few days before the Exhibition, adjured him to dispense; only obtaining, however, an omission of its *rings*.

A few of the details in the Picture, the extremities of a subordinate figure, &c., still witness to some degree of haste in finishing off the Picture; though it was again touched on, after the Exhibition's close. Too much it had become Etty's method, perhaps,—relying on that facility, a result of 'thirty years

'study,'—to drive off the execution of the year's principal Picture to the months of strenuous labour immediately preceding the Exhibition: hardly allowing sufficient time for careful Finish. The Picture once exhibited, the first enthusiasm of its creation over, coldly to resume painting on it—to any important extent, became too ungrateful a task. Slight and immaterial, however, are the deficiencies of the *Pluto and Proserpine.* The very swiftness of its execution lent an impetus of vitality, a unity, inspiring the whole composition. The impassioned impulse wherewith it was commenced and carried through speaks in forceful eloquence. One act of the imagination sufficed.

During the varnishing days, the Picture underwent a superficial alteration, the nature whereof is indicated by such entries in his Diary as:—*April 25th,* 'To Royal Academy, to meet the ideas of the 'Noodles.'—*May 1st,* 'The Noodles at me again:'—'Begin to put in white and gold draperies.'—*2nd,* 'Last day of varnishing. Took off the thick paint, 'and restored the transparent.' Few provocations could rouse Etty to a contemptuous allusion. Prudish, or,—which is the same thing,—prurient, delicacy was one of them.

A companion to the *Pluto and Proserpine* at the Academy, was the poetically conceived *Diana and Endymion:*—commenced in the previous year. A City merchant and collector of modern Pictures, Mr. Knott, afterwards numbering among Etty's most liberal and constant friends, bought it before it quitted the Painter's Studio; at £90: of his own

accord, *paying* £100,—a merchant-like mode of dealing with a Painter. Before the close of May, Lord Northwick,—for whom Etty had twelve years before painted the *Parting of Hero and Leander*, since in the possession of Mr. Neeld,—secured the *Pluto and Proserpine* (now in the possession of Mr. Gillott): for £350.

His success was alloyed by the derision with which his Portrait of the *Lady Mayoress of York*, (Mrs. Hudson), executed during the York sojourn of 1838, was greeted by the Newspapers. An abusive reception, partly originating in personal enmities,—both to the Painter and to his 'Subject,'—partly in the laudable zeal wherewith the herd watches a man who has once achieved Success; ever ready to pounce on his failures, real or apparent. Henceforward, rising higher in repute yearly, among the buyers of Pictures and with the small Art-public, Etty was subjected to a good deal of disparaging remarks from the abortive Painters, ('*stickit*' Academy Students, mostly), who palm off their sleep-talking, or spite, on a discerning British public, as 'Criticism.' The Lady's *complexion* numbered among the topics of well-bred ridicule. Her millinery was much excepted to. 'A 'devil incarnate, *with such a cap!*' vociferates one polite Gentleman of the Press.

The few Portraits from Etty's hand which have passed through the London Exhibitions have given a very inadequate idea of his real power that way. His finest,—such noble renderings of manly character as that of Mr. Atkinson, or of Mr. Champney;—brilliant transcripts of feminine beauty and vivacity

like those of Mrs. Bulmer, of her daughter, of his Brother Walter's daughters, of the 'Beauty of York,' or any other of his numerous (*con-amore*) Portrait-Studies; are little known.

It would have been well for Etty's peace had the Lady been less desirous of seeing herself at the Exhibition. Some time later, I find him making an indignant allusion, (in a letter to his Brother), to these 'Assassins of the Press.' The whole affair proved a lasting vexation. Ordinarily, he was little vulnerable to hostilities from such quarters;—little moved by the hap-hazard responses of Newspaper Oracles: taking special care *not* to read criticisms of his Pictures.—'I could never have painted if I had,'—was his significant avowal. For once, however, he could nowise elude mortification and injury: was defenceless against attacks, not to be hindered of their effect on the minds of those most interested. How can uninstructed 'Sitters' but lend an ear to the clamour of many voices, however coarse and ignorant? Nor had Etty the confident self-esteem enabling him to remain indifferent to the opinion of his friends: even while conscious of having put forth enduring Art. In this much-belied Portrait,—before exhibited passing for a faithful one,—Etty had, as in others of Lady-friends, met the difficulties of 'Subject' and of costume by bold effects of Colour and of Painter's-picturesque. Of course, the same success did not attend the attempt, as in cases more favourable to his style of Art: where there were beauty and youth to interest his fancy, to bear out and *justify* that mode of treatment,—the one alone natural to his genius.

Such a Portrait is certainly not the sample of the Painter a Collector would single out to buy, and hang up in his drawing-room; though most of Etty's Portraits *are* of the kind he would. The long list of his 'Studies,'—often realizing fabulous fancy prices,—are themselves *Portraits*: executed *con amore*, and of his own choice. But if not so 'attractive' as one of Mr. Finden's 'Beauties,' a Study of colour and effect from the hand of a great Master cannot be without its own merit: merit, far more indubitable, than any the smooth and plausible performances of most Portrait-painters by profession, — truly *Art-less* achievements,—such as 'critics' receive with annual plaudits, can lay claim to. It is to be judged of in the light of an *Exercise* of Art. Such title might, by a candid or competent judge, have been recognised:—and *was*, until the somewhat foul breath of the Newspapers made favourable opinions untenable by weak heads. At first, promoted by its possessors to a post of honour, the unhappy Picture has since seen many a reverse of Fortune,—nay, rather, a continuous declension of it.

On the *per-contra* side, to the annoyance attending the exhibition of this ill-fated essay of his Art, not only had the year's Pictures sold promptly, and,—for that date,—well; but those of former years also. His name was rising in the Auction-rooms. At a sale of Mr. Stuart's Pictures, in the Spring of 1839, the Etty's had realized good prices.

The affection cherished by the Painter for an old and valued friend is characteristically evidenced in a letter of this period to Mr. Bodley. To a promised

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visit from the latter, he is looking, (*April 27th*), 'as 'to one of the sunny gleams that add beauty and bril- 'liance to landscape as to life.'—'Even the little 'kitten gives an additional jump by her Mother's 'side at the news; and Dicky is rehearsing his 'best song. * * All are, like the pinnacles of a 'Gothic Cathedral, *looking up*,—the true direction of 'Christian eyes. But we are apt, like Mammon in 'Milton, to look *down*, at the Pavement: especially if 'paved with gold or precious stones, like that in 'Pandemonium.' * *

During the summer, a portrait,—of Sir Offley Wakeman,—was painted, the *Prodigal's Return*, sketched, and the *Entombment* begun. Lessons were taken in Perspective, — an abstruse study, (when transcending elementary limits), wherein many a veteran might wisely go to School again; and one, for which Etty had small native gift:—lessons in Perspective, from Mr. Moore. Technical experiments also, were made, for some Chiaroscuro Bas-Reliefs he had been commissioned to paint: experiments, after some failures, resulting in a successful trial of 'plaster, chalk, and mastic.'—*June 26th*, he 'paints 'delightfully on plaster and distemper;' the follow- 'ing day, *again* paints delightfully,—linseed, saccha- 'rum, turpentine, only.' In the fly-leaf of this year's Diary, (1839), a few rough notes are jotted, as to very elementary points: interesting as being his, and as illustrative of an old habit still retained. 'Size and whiting best ground,' he there records.— 'Gold and reds—Minster:' the *stained glass* in the Minster is here alluded to.—'Water-colours for

'buildings, on greyish ground, with water white;—'oil for Landscape;—crayons for rapid effects. 'DRAWING the essence of all!'

A few days spent in retouching the *Pluto and Proserpine,* and *Diana and Endymion,* on their return from the Exhibition, were followed by a short visit to Lord Northwick, the purchaser of the former; at Morcton-in-the-Marsh:—the nobleman in his first raptures with his new acquisition, 'the enchanting 'Proserpine.'

From York, his next harbour of refuge, a letter to his Niece dilates on familiar scenes and topics:—scenes familiar from the days of childhood.—'I started from 'Hull on a beautiful morning, for Old York: a de-'lightful ride through Beverley. Oh! how fine the 'Minster looked in the clear sunny air,—a Monu-'ment of the dear old Catholic time: while on the 'right,—I thought at the time it would make a good 'additional leaf in Pugin's *Contrasts,*—rose into the 'air a great, brick, steam-engine chimney; and black-'ened the fair face of Heaven with dense clouds of 'smoke. What a falling off was there!

'I passed the place where Uncle Calverley lived, 'the Wolds shining in the sun, Market Weighton, '*Haylon*:—that spot where once a garden smiled, 'and still, where many a garden-flower grows wild; 'where the old Hall and Avenue stood:'—whereof a Brother of Etty's Mother so unexpectedly came into possession, and which *his* son razed to the ground.—'The Beck flows limpidly over its gravelly 'bottom, where it did when I was a boy.'

At York, a recent triumph of his old enemy, Civic

'Improvement,' afflicts him. The Railway's devastation in those Walls, whose renewal had been a source of so much delight,—havoc consummated in his absence, already heard of and lamented in vain,—has now to be surveyed in its full extent, and duly execrated. 'Such a scene!' he groans. 'You would 'think a Legion of Devils, with Beelzebub at their 'head,' alone 'capable of such diabolic mischief. It 'made my heart sick. A little more would make me 'forswear my country: disgusted and disheartened, 'where one hoped for ease. I have been a cup too 'low ever since.'

In his *second* Lecture, of the following year, Etty had an opportunity which he did not let slip, of rating those who had suffered, nay, invited this mischief to be consummated. 'When,' he there insists, 'we had restored them,' (the Walls), 'by a 'generously supported public subscription; knowing 'that the character and attraction of York consisted 'mainly in her remains of Antiquity; we naturally 'concluded that the Magistrates and Corporation 'of York would, in all honour and integrity, pre-'serve them, and transmit them entire to posterity:— 'not sell them piecemeal to anybody that might 'happen to want them. * * What a lovely walk 'it used to be from Micklegate Bar along the Walls, 'to North-Street Postern: ancient fortifications, 'grey battlements, verdant fields, and smiling gar-'dens on either hand; finished in grand perspective 'by our noble Cathedral in one of its finest points of 'view. Go and look what it is now! * * And 'for what have the Walls been broken? Absolutely

'without any real necessity: as it is now, I believe, 'generally allowed. I am informed that the eminent 'Engineer, Stephenson, himself declared it unneces-'sary; and advised against it: I am sorry to say, 'ineffectually.—The mixture of dwelling-houses and 'picturesque garden-ground within the Walls re-'minded me of Rome.—*Altera Roma,* I used to think 'with complacency, as I passed along. What is it 'now? *Altera inferna,* more like! We walk side by 'side with trains of interesting coal-waggons; have 'the satisfaction of being smoked by the passing-'Engines, and the pleasure of hearing the music,—not 'of the robin, the blackbird, and the thrush,—but (the 'whistle) of the train from Leeds. The battering-'rams of a Railway Company have laid thy honours, 'Old Ebor, in the dust! Green Mounds and Walls 'which have stood thy friends in the hour of danger, 'when hostile armies threatened, are now not worth 'a thought. * * Those who ought to have been 'their guardians have been the first to let in the 'enemy. They have destroyed those beautiful gar-'dens, and that magnificent purple beech-tree!'

Railroad branches run, in fact, parallel with this part of the Walls, on each side. Railway coal-depôts and Station make up the whole foreground. Old maps of York suggest a very different one.

Five hundred pounds, part of the 'compensation' received by the Corporation for Railway-breaches in its Walls, for permission to spoil and devastate at one (newly restored) end of the Walls, was ultimately devoted as a peace-offering,—augmented by *another* public Subscription,—to restoration of a fragment of

the Walls on another side: of Walmgate Bar Walls, with Walmgate Bar itself and Barbican,—the Hull, or Eastern entrance. Long-proposed restorations these, which had remained *in statu quo* for some years; their execution had been a cherished wish with Etty. Their steady progress, during the years 1841 and 1842, was a source of consolation to him, amid the many losses his City had of late sustained; eliciting further Letters of exhortation and encouragement:—letters and donations. 'Were it in' his 'power,' he 'would do the whole at' his 'own cost.'

That Walmgate *Barbican,* the only still remaining one, *does* yet remain, York owes to him. Happening to come down when its Removal was in agitation, he bestirred himself; wrote, influenced others: and saved it.

Letters of remonstrance with the York Corporation, and other bodies in power—to do mischief,—formed one of Etty's standing, volunteer employments: letters against 'proposals to remove Trinity Gateway,'—a solitary Monastic fragment, and beautiful piece of Early English, still remaining in Micklegate;—letters against 'proposals to fill up the Moat' adjoining a part of Micklegate Walls, believed to be the only spot where the original features of the '*Fosse*' had been preserved intact;—letters against 'proposals to,' &c. 'Beware 'how you destroy your Antiquities!' was the burden of his exhortations. 'Guard them with religious 'care! They are what give you a decided character 'and superiority over other provincial cities. You 'have lost much: take care of what remains!'

Consolation for the destructive exploits of others,

—the peculiar accomplishment of our Modern Age, —consolation more solid than empty protests, lay for the richly-endowed Painter in his own productive power.—'Joan of Arc haunts me,' he writes from York in this September of 1839. That noble theme, significant and unhackneyed, seems to have supplanted one entertained for a year or two, from the story of Thomas à Beckett. For the latter, he had made some preliminary preparation in the way of historical reading at the British Museum, study of Armour, &c. The *Joan of Arc* was a conception dating not long previous to his present York visit:—'first thought of in Westminster Abbey,' he tells Mr. Colls at a later date;—'in Henry the Seventh's 'Chapel, under the chivalric banners that hang there. 'Hearing the Anthem sung, and looking towards the 'Grand Portal, I seemed to see her, in imagination, 'riding into the Gates of Orleans, and carrying the 'Siege thereof:' a passage in her story subsequently relinquished for the Sortie, the subject of the central and principal compartment of the Series as afterwards painted.

Though its actual execution came to be so long postponed, he is, during the present autumnal vacation, very earnestly bent on his last great Scheme. He is 'anxious to get home and begin;'—'must soon 'be back and be doing.'—By *Sept. 8th*, he had 'designed the three *Joan of Arcs*,'—in pen and ink, probably;—on the *12th*, 'goes on sketching *Joan 'of Arc*.'

From his friends the Harpers, after a short stay with them, he removed to lodgings in Blake Street.

There, he painted a Still-life piece,—*Pheasant and Peach;*—one or two Studies of Children; and a small but admirable Portrait, forcible in character, and in execution luminous, of Mr. Richardson, a Minster-Worthy much respected in York,—to Etty a familiar object of reverence from childhood:—whom, at the accustomed Minster 'Eagle,' (or Scripture Reading-Desk), he had sketched, (in Colour), as long ago as 1834. The *Still-life* piece was among the first of a class which became numerous during the latter years of Etty's life:—Studies of Colour, themes for the attainment of exceeding glory in that single particular.

One account to his Niece, of pleasure drawn from an old source;—habitual experiences in the Minster, such as he never tired of feeling or of recording; may stand for many such. Daily attendance at Afternoon Service there, had long become one of his permanent York delights. 'After Vespers,' he 'will stand' near the 'Altar,—on the third flight of steps. The 'Sun declining in golden splendor,' shines 'gloriously through the great West Window. Behind, 'the stupendous *East* Window; and on either hand, 'the glorious Transepts, with their lofty Stained 'Glass:—glorious!—springing to that Heaven which 'certainly must have inspired the mortals who built 'it. Oh! Holy Mother Church! dear Catholic 'Church! how deeply I venerate thee: thou, who 'produced such glorious efforts.'—

Again immersed in the November fogs of London, and oppressed by his November cough, Etty did *not* apply himself to the *Joan of Arc*, but to the *Wise*

and Foolish Virgins; which, in turn, gave place to the *Andromeda and Perseus:* employments, varied by a renewed Study of Perspective.

At the close of the year, (*Dec. 30th*), died Hilton, a fellow Historical Painter, and old fellow-Student: who, at the outset of the race, had quickly outstripped Etty; and whom, in his turn, Etty had, before its conclusion, left so far behind,—whether intrinsic success or outward, be regarded. Visiting with a friend, the Rooms at the Academy, Hilton had occupied as Keeper, to see the Pictures the latter had left behind; on finding so many works of ambitious aim unsold,—'How thankful to God *I* ought to be,' emphatically exclaimed Etty, 'that I have not a 'single picture on my hands.' Often, as we have seen, that result had been attained by contenting himself with very small returns. But the tide of pecuniary prosperity was at last beginning to set in his favour. The year 1839 had proved a more productive one as to Money than any of its predecessors: among the first to herald the full Receipts which flowed in, during the last few years of Etty's life. The gross incomings amounted to upwards of £900: whereof a considerable portion was realized by the sale of Studies and by minor Pieces; another considerable quota by one or two Portraits.

CHAPTER XXII.

SUNSHINE AND CLOUD. 1840—42. (ÆT. 53—55.)

Productive Months—Second Fire of York Minster—Exertions in the Minster's Behalf—Second Lecture—Macready—Trip to the Low Countries—The 'Etty Fund'—Brisk Sales—The Year's Pictures—Tilt with a Professor—Central School of Design: on the Council—Belgium Again—Antwerp—Gleanings—Wintry Gloom—Unavailing Plea for St. Stephen's—The *Dance*, from Homer—The *Magdalen*—Its Home: 'The Plantations'—York School of Design—Painter's Payments—Letters to a Child—The 'Poor Man's Friend'—A Private Grief—Public Speaking.

A GRACEFUL garland of small works was finished by the commencement of 1840, for the British Institution: *Bright-eyed Fancy Hovering o'er;—A Little Girl in a Nautilus Shell,* (or the 'Little Mariner'); and a *Group of Children.* All belonged to a very attractive class of Etty's works. And all found ready purchasers.

The *Wise and Foolish Virgins,* with the *Perseus and Andromeda,* kept him busily occupied throughout the Winter. To the former especially, he devoted himself with all the energy and vehemence of will characteristic of the man: notwithstanding his chronic cough, now so heavy a drag-chain. These prolonged 'fits of coughing' had assumed that intractable character destined yearly to increase in intensity. 'Cough very bad,'—'coughed amazingly,'—are, during the winter and spring months, almost daily entries.

The year's quota had no sooner been despatched to

the Academy, than *The Female Bathers Surprised by a Swan* was commenced. He continued, as in the busiest part of the season, to paint regularly every day from two or three Models; and on various Pictures.

His labours meet with unexpected interruption. May 22nd is marked FATAL FRIDAY in his Diary. On that day, he heard of the scarce credible *second* fire of York Minster,—the fruit of culpable negligence among the so-called Guardians of the edifice:—the 'carelessness of a Workman employed to repair the 'Clock,' being the proximate cause. Breaking out in the South-West Tower, the flames were allowed, as usual, to acquire full power before any efficient check was brought to bear.

The whole Nave was gutted, as the Choir had before been; and, being of limestone, was completely calcined by the fire: the glorious Stained Glass which fills its Windows happily surviving. Again, the great Central Tower interposed to save the Transepts. York has earned itself a peculiar kind of celebrity among Cathedral Cities, by passiveness in seeing its chief ornament destroyed. Two such Fires within ten years are no result of Chance, but of deep-seated habits of carelessness and sluggish obtuseness.

Etty, for one, could not acquiesce in the necessity of a decennial Fire. On hearing the strange tidings, he burst into tears. For many days, the Misfortune clouded life for him; as if it had been a personal one. As such, in fact, he felt it. It even stood in the way of Work,—a remarkable phenomenon with so

indomitable a lover of his Art, and of employment. As soon as he had 'had time to collect his thoughts,' after the 'stupor of three days the astounding intelli-'gence threw him into,' his first impulse was to exert himself in preservation of what remained. He wrote to the *Yorkshire Gazette*,—urging prompt steps to be taken in guarding the roofless Tower and Nave from the weather, &c. To the Dean and Chapter, he transmitted his friend Cottingham's 'noble and dis-'interested offer,' to superintend the Minster's Restoration free of professional charge: an offer of some 'thousand guineas' value: which received 'no 'suitable acknowledgment' from Dean and Chapter; who had previously applied to Sir Robert Smirke.

A visit to York, accelerated by the mischance, was paid in June: to survey the extent of the mischief, and forward its reparation. At one of the Meetings preliminary to Restoration, he spoke with much fervour in behalf of the 'Holy Temple,' as it lay in 'smoking ruins;' the 'winds and rain of heaven 'breaking in:' conjuring his hearers to 'open their 'hands without grudging.' He gave a good example by subscribing liberally himself. A vivid picture was set before them of the catastrophe.—How, 'on a fine 'evening in May,' 'a flame was seen in the beautiful 'South-West Tower. * * The sun which had sunk 'behind the hills, had scarcely ceased to gild it with 'its holy light, ere it was illumined within, by a far 'more fearful glare:—the light that lit it to ruin and 'destruction. Those beautiful Bells that so often 'had given the tidings of joy, congratulation, and 'triumph,—that little Bell that used to hang in

'the Lantern Tower, and had led us so often, 'willingly to Prayer, Morning and Evening, (whose 'sound I recollect from a child); that noble and 'sonorous Clock that so often has given warning of 'the rapid flow of the tide of Time to the ocean of 'Eternity:—all these things so dear to our hearts, so 'wedded to our affections, in a few short, dreadful 'hours, whelmed into one mass of ruin, molten ore, 'and rubbish! The noble Nave, that perspective of 'splendour, finished by the glorious West Window, 'resplendent like a mass of living gold, when we left 'the Church after Evening Prayers;—with the gor- 'geous Windows of the Side Aisles'—windows, 'un- 'exampled in richness, unrivalled in any Cathedral in 'England;—is now open to the winds and rain of 'heaven.'

Truly 'a rueful sight,' he had found the Minster; 'but not so bad as might have been.' At first, 'very 'much out of heart;' he mends as soon as he is 'stirring' for it. A Lecture, (his Second), was prepared, and read; 'fifty pages of Manuscript:'—Lecture 'on English Cathedrals,'—designed to arouse York in behalf of its own. Its delivery at the Philosophical Society, (*July 6th*),—throwing him, like that of all his Lectures and Speeches, into much excitement;—made a good local impression. Printed in the Yorkshire Papers, its Author again takes pride in dispersing among friends and acquaintance, copies of his literary handiwork.

Restored to the 'sacred and holy calm of home,' one of his first occupations was an Antiquarian one: a reply to a question from the Committee of the

Temple Church Restoration, as to the future position of the Organ;—the modern difficulty in an ancient Church. Of the four positions proposed,—between the Round Church and the square,—in the Arch near the West Entrance,—against or beyond the Eastern Window,—or in a chamber built out from the North Aisle; he pronounced in favour of the last, as *least* objectionable:—the one ultimately adopted.

The quiet tenor of a productive life resumed, various Pictures,—some just commenced, others approaching completion,—were forwarded; Perspective studied, under Mr. Moore. Further Sketches were also made for the *Joan of Arc;* a 'large Canvas set 'up,' (in *August*), and other preliminary steps taken for the colossal project.

On the dispersion, during the Summer, of Mr. Digby Murray's Collection, Etty had been solicitous to secure his favourite *Bridge of Sighs* for his friend Macready; who had long coveted it. Solicitous, too, he had felt, to prevent its coming under the hammer. 'I hate my pictures brought to an auction-room,' he had expostulated with his Brother, from York. Auction-rooms had as yet (1840), proved an ordeal little favourable to him:—some few years later to become the arena of triumph. Absence from London prevented his effecting the second half of his wish. But the Picture *did* fall into the Tragedian's hands: with whom it still remains, a prized possession. Of Macready, Etty was an ardent admirer:—admired the man and the Actor. Seldom visiting the theatre but when his friend performed, he then enjoyed the show with a very keen relish. During Macready's management

of Covent Garden, the Painter addressed to him more than one letter, spontaneous expression of the delight he as an Artist felt in the results achieved. Such enthusiasm, the Actor declares, acknowledging one of these letters, in a later year, (*March*, 1843), 'really came like a recompense,' raised his spirits amid much discouragement.

In September, a long-desired visit was paid to the land of Rubens. Ten days were expended, accompanied by his Niece, in a brief progress through the Low Countries. Ostend, Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, Bonn, were passed through: their Churches, Palaces, Picture-galleries, more or less hastily inspected. From Bonn, voyaging down the Rhine towards Rotterdam, he thence returned home.—'A stormy Saturday night, and a sunny 'Sunday morning, brought us,' he relates, within sight 'of the white cliffs of dear Albion.' And 'by six that afternoon,' 'landed at the Custom 'House,' by 'a crazy boat, that had almost upset 'us into the Thames, we gladly feel the *terra-firma* of 'London under our feet.' He returns—with some 'shot from the field of Waterloo,' and a medal of Rubens. Throughout the little trip, Rubens was the chief magnet; at whose shrine, Etty's homage never failed. A few purchases also, had been made, of Painter's properties: among others, 'a milk-can' at the Hague; a 'frock and red wooden shoes:' which afterwards figured in a piece called *Flemish Courtship*.

At home, still holding aloof from his large Canvas, he turned to the *Bathers Surprised by a Swan*, and

smaller works: for the former, taking many an early morning walk to St. James's Park, to sketch from the Swans there. During the foggy, working season, many a 'cruel night' of his cough is noted in his Diary, many a day on which he is 'awfully punished by it.' His sensitive 'Trachea,' acutely conscious from what quarter the wind blows, induces special commemoration of some prevailing 'icy wind of death,' or 'wind 'like a demon,' which meets him at Street-corners; as he sallies out to the Academy, or homeward from it.

A little previous to the present date, Etty had made his first Will; at a friend's persuasion, and with some reluctance: not being free from the old-fashioned superstition respecting that act. Indeed, at first, he hardly knew 'whether he had a shilling to 'leave.' Bequeathing to his Niece £50 a year, and to various friends and dependents small legacies and Pictures, he was still doubtful whether there would be assets enough to meet the bequests. So little beforehand had the annual receipts,—after the regular payments to his Brother,—enabled him to become. Some of his practical well-wishers, seeing the considerable sums he was now receiving, thought he ought to be securing a provision for old age. His friends the Harpers,—friends admitted to the closest terms of intimacy,—knowing his ignorance of business, resolved to act for him: paying into the Bank one or two sums of money due from themselves and friends. To his own surprise and delight, Etty found himself a fund-holder: the first incident to arouse in his mind a love of accumulation. The arrears due to the Firm of Bodley and Etty having, by this time, been amply

acquitted, Etty, after defraying the fixed charges of his own small household,—charges, which did *not* increase with increasing income,—was free to invest his money as it came in, in the Three per Cents. Early in 1841, £300 Bank Stock,—whereof part was contributed by a first instalment from the purchaser of the *Ten Virgins*,—had been secured to the 'Etty Fund,' as the title ran among friends: the humble beginnings of what, eight years later, assumed important dimensions.

Thus, at the age of Fifty-four, Etty first began to realize property of his own; after thirty-six years' devotion to his Art, and twenty of mastery in it. Henceforward, the aim to secure a Competence was not lost sight of. It to some extent influenced the subsequent tenor of his labours; inducing a freer production of small works,—or rather, development of Studies into Pictures. An influence, I cannot with some, consider prejudicial or derogatory. This class of works better suited years of infirm health, and consequently, declining finish, than more elaborate and laborious compositions. In the former, acquired mastery of eye and hand enabled him to convey, without loss, his vivid apprehensions of Nature. If there be cause for regret, it is, that a crowd of ambitious but secondary performances, jostled with the *Joan of Arc*; postponing the fulfilment of his noble conception until his physical powers were barely adequate to it. One would fain its execution had been contemporaneous with the *Pluto and Proserpine*, or the *Dance from Homer*, (the period of its conception): rather than with the *Graces*, (the second), and the second *Choice of Paris*.

An uncertain Market was ceasing to be the reward of the Season's labours. Of the six Pictures sent, in 1841, 'to Trafalgar Square,' the two principal were sold in one week, at or before the Academy-Dinner: the *Prodigal's Return*, to the Marquis of Lansdowne, for two hundred and fifty guineas; the *Bathers Surprised by a Swan*, to Mr. Vernon, for two hundred; also, the *Still Life*, to Mr. Knott, for thirty guineas. At such success, 'joy steals upon me,' he confesses. On the *Bathers*, the Diary, (*June 21st*), records, a 'diabolical injury:' due doubtless, to the outraged virtue and sensitive modesty of some indignant 'Father of a Family.'

David at his Harp,—'I will awake right early,' became the companion of the second *Hero and Leander*. Mr. Thorp of Alnwick, son of one of the Painter's early and kindest Patrons, having drawn an Art-Union prize for £20, and wishing to invest it in a small work from the same hand as the *chef-d'œuvre* he already possessed, asked Etty to choose one for him. The latter having nothing,—or no fitting companion for the *Hero and Leander*, to suit that price, offered the *David*, a necessarily higher priced one; reducing the sum in his young friend's favour to £55:—£35 more than the amount of the prize, but nearly as much below the market value of the Piece. Etty would always rather sell at a low price to those he knew and in whom he was interested, than at a higher, to those beyond the pale. In latter years, he became surrounded by clients exclusively favoured in this way. His anxiety to do the very best for Mr. Thorp is evidenced by a long correspondence, which

terminates by the latter's purchasing both the *David* and a small-priced work of the Painter's old Assistant, George Franklin; which Etty had recommended as an alternative to his own.

With Critics as with Patrons, the year's Pictures found favour. The *Morning Post* was 'by no means 'sure' the *Prodigal's Return* was not 'the best 'imaginative' Picture in the Exhibition.' Not impossibly. For it is one of those chosen samples of Etty's Art wherein, as Mr. Leslie, a competent judge on such a point, declares, 'Expression is carried as 'far as possible.'

To Arms, Ye Brave!—a Mars-and-Venus group,—found a purchaser, in the following year, in Mr. Wright, for £200. The Amateur, for a while in ecstasies with his new acquisition, after a time began to be disconcerted by the light in which the 'nudities 'of your last fair lady' are regarded by matter-of-fact relatives and friends, innocent of Art; 'almost 'to wish she *had* a little more covering:'—in the country, people being 'led away by first impressions, 'and not to be reasoned into any other.' The ladies 'look grave when the Picture is mentioned. The men 'laugh!' Some kind of temporary gauze had ultimately to be cobbled up in water-colours.

In Professor Cockerell's Lectures on Architecture of (I think) this season, some disparaging allusions to Gothic, and a comparison disadvantageous to Michael Angelo, stirred Etty, to whom both were dear, into a Letter of friendly expostulation.—'The zeal you 'showed,'—he commences, in the Draft from which I 'quote,—and desire to be useful, cannot be too much

'applauded But there were *three* Heresies which I 'cannot pass over in silence: lest it should seem that 'silence gives consent! —And that, too, when I, one 'of the Seven Champions of Goths, and a devout 'though humble admirer of Michæl Angelo, was 'sitting *en face!* You were a bold man.' The Professor had observed of Cologne Cathedral, 'it 'seemed a curse on all such mighty efforts, that they 'should never be finished;' mentioning in the same breath the Tower of Babel: most unjustly, as the Painter thinks; who had taken a pilgrimage 'to its 'august shrine, in September.' The Tower of Babel's beginning, he answers, was made 'in open defiance of 'Deity, in the attempt to get out of the reach of His 'judgments;' Cologne's, 'to the honour of Almighty 'God,'—the 'noblest purpose any work of human Art 'can have.'—'Mighty were the minds which planned 'the magnificent edifice. And sorry I am, that our 'honourable Professor should throw a stone at it, 'instead of carrying one *to* it: as was the practice of 'even the great, in ages of Faith.'—The Architect had also spoken 'slightingly' of Gothic in general; had 'classed it with Chinese, Saracenic,' &c.; 'seeming 'to put it out of the pale;' observing it 'owed its late 'introduction into fashion to Horace Walpole:' &c. To all which, copious response. — The last subject of complaint was 'the comparison' (with Raffaello), 'drawn to such disadvantage against Michæl Angelo: 'that noble old fellow, who, whether we look at' him 'as one of the greatest of the great, (of Artists), or 'to the noble independence of his character, in both 'is entitled to our homage.'

Sedulous in setting the Students the example of his presence at the Academy-Lectures, he was no inattentive auditor; even entered into them with gusto and interest. Another time, Professor Green, in warning the Students against occasional Anatomical inaccuracies in classic Sculpture, having appeared, (to Etty), to disparage the Antique itself; draws from the Painter, jealous for the latter's good fame, a remonstrance.

In 1840, Etty had been appointed to the Council of the School of Design. Making it a rule substantially to fulfil his part in any trust whereof he accepted the honour, he was one of the very few who regularly attended its Meetings: at a cost of three or four hours out of many a day, during the season of the year when he could ill spare the time. In general, more vivacious persons, and less competent, led the proceedings of the Council. Constitutionally slow and diffident, Etty required preparation to speak. But 'at times,' reports Mr. Dyce, 'he was much ex-'cited; and delivered his opinions with great energy 'and effect. Those opinions were always valuable.'

In reference to the illustrated wrapper of a Serial, issued by the Council for the Pupils' improvement, he writes (*May* 13*th*, 1841), to Mr. Dyce, then Head-Master of the Central School:—'Your notion of the 'boys dancing round Nature, I like! Perhaps, be-'cause something like one *I* have begun some 'months:' (*The Innocent are Gay*). But 'instead of 'Nature, they are dancing round a woman merely. 'How would a design in bas-relief (round), be, of '*that*?—A lofty, majestic figure of Nature; her brows

'bound with stars, her snowy bosom veiled with 'clouds; attended by the Three Graces, or the Three 'Plástic Arts:—the circle of boys dancing outside all? 'Ornament should be essentially graceful. And, as 'the School is more from Art than Nature, I think 'they' (the Arts) 'should be in the group: a wreath of 'ornamental flowers round the design, and a square 'of rich ornament outside. I merely throw out this 'suggestion. Perhaps it would be best, after all, 'merely ornamental: *but of the best order.*'

In July, Etty took a second trip to Belgium, making straight for Antwerp.

'It was getting darkish,' he thence writes, to his Niece, (*July 6th*, 1841), 'when we got out to sea. 'Then began the tug of war, when out of the shelter 'of land. As she' (the vessel) 'rolled a good deal, 'and a fresh wind on, there were strange and pressing 'calls for the Steward. I kept on deck all night, on 'a blanket and a mattress. Sinking into a nap, and 'awakened by the roaring sea, I wondered where I 'had got to. It was rather too boisterous to be the 'singing of my Kettle. Some ladies got into their 'Carriages. But Old Neptune did not let Aristocracy 'escape.—Basins were called for, even into *their* 'luxurious retreats. As morning dawned, the wind 'abated, and the Belgian coast appeared in the misty 'morning. Walcheren and Flushing, the grave of 'many a brave English soldier, we passed close to; 'and entered the wide-watered Scheldt:—about eleven, 'anchored off the Quay, or rather hove to.'

From Antwerp, he paid two visits to the Trappist Convent, ten miles distant.—'The porter, a primi-

tive-looking old man, with a long white beard, 'opened the gate, and, as we passed, fell down on 'his knees; then rang the bell. A Brother of the 'Order—in the same dress as the one I have, black 'and white,—came and showed us over the Convent: 'through the Printing Office, where two Monks 'were printing off impressions,—as I used to do,—'of Sacred Music; and were working hard. Through 'the Refectory; where each little platter, knife and 'spoon, and basin, were placed.—But it was past their 'dinner hour. Through a room, where several of 'the Brotherhood,—each a fine old Picture,—were 'reading, like the Fathers,'—'absorbed in massive 'volumes;'—'never looking up, even for a moment, at 'our entrance: unless we bowed at passing,—which 'they returned. * * Very fine Studies. I should 'like to have sketched some of them.'—'Then to the 'Chapel, where our Conductor knelt: and so did I.'

On his second visit, he accepted their hospitality: dining off 'new milk, eggs, beans, carrots, cherries,' with 'other productions of the earth;' and going to bed at eight. He scans with attentive Painter's eye, the proceedings of the Fraternity, and the 'beautiful 'effects' developed; obtaining 'ideas' which he hopes 'will be useful' to him in future Pictures. Called up at two, 'to see the Monks in their Choir by torch-'light,' and breakfasting off 'brown bread, and milk;' he next made a 'successful attempt to buy a dress,' —a Monk's Habit, that is:—with it 'marching off 'in triumph to the Diligence.'

From Antwerp to Mechlin, and an admiring survey of its Cathedral and numerous specimens of Rubens;

to Ghent; to Bruges. At Bruges, he sallied forth to a Capuchin Convent, and 'purchased a Capuchin 'dress:' with a view to the *Joan of Arc* again.

By Ostend, to London: where, awaking one fine Sunday morning 'delighted to find himself in his 'own bed,' and in his own quiet home; he is free to ruminate on all seen during the ten days' cruise among Convents, Cathedrals, and Rubens's. The '*précieuses choses*' gleaned on his Travels had been successfully 'passed' through the fingers of Custom-House harpies: the 'Antwerp Milk-can, of some-'what better shape than the Dutch one' (bought the previous year); another from Bruges; the Capuchin gown, &c.; all, serviceable accessories for Pictures in hand or contemplated.

Fuller than ever of enthusiasm for his Master the Fleming, he dilates on the glorious appearance the latter makes at Mechlin: on the *Draught of Fishes*—'*Miraculous*,' in a double sense; on the *Decollation of St. John the Baptist*:—'the scene in the Prison 'at night, the flashing of the torches on the dark 'Armour, the deep warm tone of the Colour, and the 'fine Composition.'

Of this year's York sojourn, a pleasant feature was a two days' sketching-trip with his friend John Harper, to Bolton Abbey: both making free pencil jottings of Architecture and Landscape. On returning from York, the Painter fell in with the innovation of Rail-way *vice* Coach. Faithful loiterer on the old ways, he had hitherto stuck by the latter; had continued, despite asthma and cough, to brave the twenty-four hours' journey outside.

Advancing more than one important Picture during the Autumn, he resumed lessons in Perspective, and his Sketches for the *Joan of Arc*; reading also by fits in 'old Chronicles,' at the British Museum and elsewhere.

The year 1841 witnessed the deaths of two leading Academic brethren, Wilkie and Chantrey: 'Wilkie 'in the deep bosom of the Ocean buried;'—'he who 'has delighted so many, and raised a smile at his 'humour and comic talent,' having 'a tragical and 'lonely funeral.' Losses which added a darker shade to November days:—days trying to a Painter, peculiarly so to Etty. To him, with a mind and frame alike impressionable, a clear sky or a dull was a question of moment;—whether blasts from the East prevailed or breezes from the West:—matters carefully noted in his Diary. A sunless day subtracted so much from existence: a bright enhancing it. 'When the sun shines on it genially,' the world is to him 'beautiful and captivating.' At other times, he is glad to take refuge in reminiscences. To him, often 'in fancy's dream,' he writes, 'Mozart's Masses 'and *Agnus Dei* are dying in echos along the Minster 'Aisles.—'Tis *but* a dream.'

In December, a nearer loss deepened Winter's discouragements: that of his valued friend Sydney 'Taylor. Kept myself occupied, but very melan-'choly,' he confesses, in his Diary.

During the ensuing year, the old-accustomed help of his friend the Newspaper Editor, was not a little missed in one of the old-accustomed struggles against the Iconoclasts. For daily zeal in painting did not

preclude zealous action in behalf of familiar Antiquities when in danger. St. Stephen's Chapel, such remains,—and they were considerable,—as the Fire had not prevailed against, had been sentenced to annihilation, by the sympathising Architect of the pseudo-Gothic *New Houses:* the same magnanimous and high-minded Artist, who has more recently, (1854), won golden opinions for himself among Art-loving circles, by the laudable freedom from paltry pedantry or unworthy feeling he has displayed towards the Baron Marochetti, and the latter's noble Statue of *Cœur de Lion.* A work of Art, this latter, uncourtly persons declare, more intrinsically valuable, than the whole three millions worth of lifeless carving and tautologous inanity: by the side whereof it stands—or (lately) stood.

While it was yet time, or seemed so, Etty,—on hearing of this intention to 'take down without delay 'the Walls of the Chapel with a view to safety,' —protested (with other lovers of Antiquity) against the deliberate and unnecessary sacrifice of a National monument and noble sample of ancient Art. He drew up a Letter also, in the *Morning Herald,* 'To 'the Artists of Great Britain:' in defence of our Antiquities generally.

But the omnipotent 'Master of the Situation,' who in all matters,—from the (self-multiplying) Estimates, and his own 'Little Bill,' downwards,—quietly has his will, and lets the patient Public cavil; who has defied and hocussed successive Ministries; against whom, Parliaments and Mr. Hume avail nothing; was not so readily to be deterred from his

destructive purpose as a Provincial Dean and Chapter had once been. Huge London, moreover, is not so easy to arouse in protection of its own, as the little 'City' of York. Every thing in the 'New Palace' *must* be *new*, and Mr. Barry's own. No space, however small, for a genuine, though defaced landmark of Art and History, could be spared by the accomplished Copyist,—the presiding Genius of the costly and pretentious pile which now burdens the site of (once) the most graceful of English structures. The proposed demolition *was* silently consummated: an apathetic Public knowing nothing of the matter. The Chapel has been replaced by a 'Hall' of Mr. Barry's own concoction. The Crypt and some of the Cloisters are all which have been spared. Indignant remonstrants were soothed with the consolatory assurance that they 'could view' some of the original details (public property), by calling on Mr. Barry; and that Messrs. Brayley and associates had made 'careful drawings' of the Chapel ("beautiful in ruin"), prior to its final removal, and carting away in the form of 'old material' and dishonoured rubbish, by Messrs. Peto and Grissell's workmen: drawings subsequently published, and to be consulted by any whose sorrow for that lovely Fragment needs sharpening.

More successful than the endeavour to conserve was that to produce. The *Dance*, from Homer's description of Achilles' Shield, a Picture long contemplated, but only regularly commenced, in oils, in the Autumn of 1841, was the leading production of the Season. It did not, at first, prove a fortunate

venture. 'That year' (1842), Etty used afterwards to assert, 'I was in despair.' The *Dance* 'was hung 'in a corner; and not a shilling offered for it.' As late as seven years before his death, an important and beautiful work from his hand had to go a-begging. It was despatched at the end of the Season in search of an owner, to the Birmingham Institution. There, it ultimately sold, to Mr. Bacon of Nottingham: at the reduced price of 360 guineas, instead of the £500 originally asked at the Academy. In 1845, Mr. Colls purchased the Picture for 600 guineas. The latest price it has fetched was a thousand. On its change of hands in 1845, a share in the profits fell to Etty's lot:—a rare windfall. Mr. Bacon had sold it at an unexpected premium. Having originally obtained it at a lower price than that put on it—even in the Birmingham Exhibition,—he voluntarily handed the Painter a bonus of £80: the difference, deducting expenses, between the sum once asked of him, and that given. A reparation very honourable to that Gentleman. Had so—*Quixotic* must I call it?—a step been adopted by all the private gentlemen who have enriched themselves by investments in Etty's Pictures,—buying them cheap, selling them dear,—the Producer would have died many thousands the richer.

His second more important Picture in 1842, *The Innocent are Gay*, (Dancing Boys), the Picture referred to in his letter to Mr. Dyce, found a purchaser, for 200 guineas: in Etty's best Patron of these years, Mr. Knott.

Of his minor Pieces,—*Two of the Modern Time*,

(Lady and Lapdog), *One of the Queen* (a Warrior): the latter sold to Mr. Colls at £25. His only Picture at the Academy in general request—was the *Magdalen;* of which the price, £90, affords an instance of the moderate scale to which he still adhered. For this very Picture, its possessor has since been offered £500 to £600. A fine sample of Etty's Art, which yet offended no prudish prejudice, its possession was coveted by many, who might not venture on buying 'less' decorous' specimens of the Master. At his own Private View, and at that of the Academy, it could have been sold 'half a dozen 'times over,' he states; had it not been bespoken. It was painted for a friend and Admirer, the Rev. Isaac Spencer: who had commissioned it from a Study; prescribing as a text,—'Sorrow which worketh repentance.' But in reality, remarks the owner, she is reading in the Book: 'there is joy 'over one Sinner that repenteth.' Glad Hope blends with Contrition. 'It *shall* be worthy of my 'friend,' Etty had promised. And he fulfilled his resolve. A signal example of the Painter's powers of Drawing and Colour; it is equally refined in feeling: in sentiment, earnest and affecting. In some respects, it stands (almost) unique among Etty's works: as one wherein his love and knowledge of feminine Form are dedicated to religious subject;—unique too, for the delicate loveliness of the face.

The *Magdalen* was too true and pure an achievement to escape the abuse of a discerning Press: always more difficult to please,—if original genius, not skilful mediocrity attempt the task,—than the

cultivated lovers of Art, who risk their money and their reputation for taste. Complaints were made, not readily to be reconciled, of a 'cadaverous coun-'tenance,' and, of there being 'for a Magdalen, *too* '*much colour* in the cheeks,' and a bosom too luxuriant. The genial friend who had been fortunate enough to secure the Picture, justly answers:—'Your 'Penitent had beauty to give up, charms to sacrifice; 'even whilst her cheeks were pale with sorrow for her 'past sins.' From a working man, subsequently fell unbiassed testimony to the religious feeling informing the Picture. 'I see, Sir,' he interrupted the Owner in his explanations, 'what it is: I could look 'at it till my eyes run over.'

About the time Etty was painting the *Magdalen*, a black-letter edition of Chaucer attracted his attention at a Student's on whom he was paying a friendly call. Turning over its leaves, he lighted on the opening passage of the *Lamentation of Mary Magdalen:* a poem once attributed to Chaucer. Kneeling down to the book as it happened to lie on a chair, he read aloud, with great unction, the few first lines; observing how well they suited his Picture.

'The Plantations,' his friend Mr. Spencer's residence, near the pretty, rustic Village of Acomb, two miles out of York, was becoming a favourite spot with Etty. — 'Your description,' he gossips, (*May 6th*), 'aided by my own recollection of the peaceful beauties 'of your delightful retreat, makes me sigh out of the 'mighty Babylon, to come and enjoy it. I fancy I 'see the cows quietly chewing the cud in the sunshine, 'on the sweet fields before your house. I see the dis-

'tant Minster, hear the Bells of Bishop-Hill or Coney 'Street, on the breeze; watch the opening beauties 'of Spring; and feel that expansion of heart, Nature, 'looked at with reference to the goodness and mercy 'of an Almighty God, alone can give. But it's all a 'dream. The chimneys of London are about me.' —But, 'I believe I have one of the sweetest, quietest 'spots in it. I have sent you a *Catalogue*,' (of the Exhibition); 'hoping it may amuse you. "'Tis plea- 'sant," Cowper says,

> "'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat,
> 'To peep at such a world.'"

Later, (*June 21st*): he has 'often thought of your 'pretty place this hot weather;'—'thought of it and 'longed;' though himself 'very pleasantly situated 'on the River, and the trees below his window looking 'very green.'

Concerning a promised visit to the Plantations, he mentions,—'using that candour which alone one can 'with a Friend,'—what was now an indispensable condition to his absence from home. 'My Niece, who 'has been with me seventeen years, my faithful Friend, 'or as I jocularly call her, my right-hand man, has 'become so much a part and parcel of myself, that I 'feel lost when she is far from me. Her health is 'dear to me as my own. Though she has friends in 'and near York, who would be happy to receive her,— 'to say the truth,—we don't like to be separated. 'She has also an invitation part of the time, to Given- 'dale; which is a very healthy part.—So have I.

'I have given up my house in Blake Street; and 'don't mean to take another till I have one of my own,

'and leave the Mighty Babylon for the "*otium cum* '*dignitate*" of a retreat in or near York. Poor 'Strickland, my landlord, I am sorry to hear, is now 'dead. I could have better spared a better man.'—'He was a Falstaff without stuffing.'

A propos of a proposition of his Friend's to exhibit the *Magdalen* for York's benefit, at a York Bookseller's, Etty, writing in September, knows of 'no 'serious objection:' but warns him, that he 'will have 'to encounter the remarks of the ignorant, the 'sneerers, the would-be serious, but really impure. ' * * In a community like York, not conversant 'in Art much, remarks *would* be made. You perhaps 'might feel indignant. I say this, knowing your 'friendly warmth of feeling towards me and my 'children, as I call my Pictures.'

The scheme *was* subsequently carried out: with indifferent success as regarded exciting any interest or sympathy with the work among the York citizens. The Penitent's uncovered bosom startled the modesty of the York ladies; who looked at the *Magdalen* but to turn their eyes another way. I suppose the sensitive ladies never bestow a stray glance even on their own fair forms:—for fear of contamination.

'We are going,' continues Etty, in the same letter, (*September*), 'on Saturday,'—spending Sunday,—'to 'Bohun Lodge,' (Mr. Knott's), 'near East Barnet: 'a lovely spot, where are Grottos, long twilight 'Groves,' amid which '*La Madalena* might wash 'away her sins with tears of godly sorrow;—and whose 'kind host and hostess' break 'the Tenth Command-'ment about your Picture, every time they see it.'

During his Autumn stay in York, the promised visit to his friend's pleasant seat at 'The Plantations,' was paid. Here, and at his modest lodgings in Gillygate, he paints some York Fruit and out-door Sketches;—'a distant View of York, and a Sketch from a Pond prettily encircled with trees, in his friend's pleasure-grounds:—grounds where, in after years, he used often to dash off a clump of trees, bit of brushwood, or 'effect' of sky, to be afterwards introduced in his Pictures. His slight and generalized backgrounds were all Studies from Nature. At early morning, he would walk out, when staying with a friend, and make them.—'From 'my room here,' he narrates while at Mr. Spencer's, 'I look 'over the Vale of York, and Cattle, Cows, &c., 'quietly feeding in the peaceful pastures of Clifton 'Ings. There, the river winds its serpentine length; 'and there, the square sail seems sailing through 'meadows. Last, not least, the noble Minster rises 'above the houses of dear old York:'—one of the finest distant views of the Minster; the pointed roof of the Chapter House grouping with the square Towers of the Minster,—in picturesque combination. —'Rich foliage, and apple-trees bearing fruit, are the 'foreground of the Picture. And the birds are at 'their matin song.'

At the period of this visit, a cherished scheme of Etty's was realized,—the establishment of a School of Design in York: one of the first Provincial Schools set on foot. The hope of securing this benefit to his native City, had alone, two years after his unavailing effort to establish a School of Art in the Hospitium

at St. Mary's, induced him to accept a seat at the Council Board of the Central School: and to indefatigable attendance there. Ever on the watch to forward his darling project, he lost no opportunity of pressing it on his Colleagues; finally winning them, despite considerable opposition, to his belief, that York, though no centre of Manufactures, was, from 'its quiet, collegiate' character, well adapted for the Study of the Arts. He obtained a unanimous vote in its favour. September, 1842, the School was opened. Etty, much busied with preliminary arrangements, 'getting them to cut up the Window higher,—'to give a better light,' getting 'the room coloured, 'and some useless windows stopped up;' delivered also, a short Address, introductory to that of Mr. Dyce, then Director of the Head School. And before leaving York, he saw the first Cast put up in the School: 'a proud day for dear old York and me.'

A kindness or an act of hospitality Etty was slow to forget: during these latter years was wont to acknowledge by a masterly Sketch or lustrous bit of Colour. The friend who, without professional fee, had made his first Will, when the Painter had only a few hundreds and the contents of his Studio to bequeath, had been, for this and other kind offices, requited by a beautiful Sketch,—*Young Girl with a Dove*,—sportively entitled by Etty, in the accompanying note, 'The Wing of a Chicken and Part of the 'Breast.' More than one debt for professional services was thus cancelled by Picture or Study, which Time has briefly quadrupled in pecuniary value.

The 'Sketch' just mentioned may well detain us a

moment as exemplar of Etty's Art, in such 'Studies 'from Nature.' Characteristic illustration it supplies, I remember, of the subtilty of his Colour, and of that distinctive sentiment it was for him so easy to infuse into his Studies. The joyous face, the rosy pouting lips, laughing violet eyes; the budding fulness of the bosom, the grace of lines throughout: all breathes the very sentiment of Youth. The Sketch, from the very fact of being one, will,—like many another, attentively scrutinized,—let us the more nearly into the secrets of Etty's practice as a Colourist. The pearly tones of the Flesh, across which glance the blue shadows and violet veins (even), are thrown up by the dreamy draperies:—white, then luminous green; beneath the waist, orange. And the concerted harmony of melodious hues is completed by the purple distance: not forgetting,—for no link in the composition *can* be lost,—the golden wristlets: one hand sportively raised, resting on the youthful head.

After Etty's return to London, his hospitable friends of Givendale having, in one of their frequent parcels of game, sent him a very fine Golden Pheasant, he took the opportunity of painting a glowing 'Study' from it; and of returning them,—as he had long wished to do,—a Painter's recognition of past hospitalities and friendliness. 'The effects of Givendale 'air and exercise, and living,' he acknowledges, in allusion to his Niece's visit of the Autumn, 'are still 'visible in her; still impressed in lively colours on 'her and my memory: not likely to flee away, as a 'feather before the wind.' The lady to whom he writes, had said she should value anything from his

hand, 'were it only a Feather.' He accordingly, made one of the Pheasant's feathers a conspicuous feature in his 'Study;' and in his Letter, plays upon the word.

Writing to a daughter of the Rev. E. P. Owen, he speaks of this same 'very wild and pretty part of 'the Wold Hills of Yorkshire;' relates, how his Niece used 'to gather mushrooms,—and, what is still better, 'Health,—and the wild flowers of the pretty hills and 'valleys; where, the pure crystal streams run down 'the hill-side, and "the nibbling flocks do stray:" 'sunshine on the hills, health on the breeze.' * * 'I 'am painting,' he continues, '*Neptune and his Court.* 'And, if it would not be profanation in a Christian 'land to offer petitions to a Pagan Deity, I would 'invoke them to blow softly on you, my dear friend; 'and gentle Zephyrs with health on their wings to 'restore you.' In the same Letter, he has occasion to thank the little girl for a pair of Slippers; valued 'as 'an expression of feeling from a pure and youthful 'mind;'—'because exceedingly pretty in choice and 'arrangement of Colours, (in which you will say I '*am* a judge);'—'and because useful and easy,—'no small recommendation to an old bachelor.'

Equally characteristic of his kindly ways with children is his next, (*Dec. 16th*); to the same.

'Very sorry, dear Mary, you have cut your little 'hand. Mind and take better care for the future! 'and let me know when it is well. * * Miss 'Etty and myself unite in thanks' for some 'pretty 'remembrances:'—'the marks for her, the Sea-'nymph's hair for me. No doubt, *it* has dropt

'from the Toilet of one of the many of old Nep-
'tune's Daughters: from the "golden comb" of some
'of those fair maidens; wherewith she has sat on
'diamond rocks, "sleeking her soft alluring locks."'
* * 'Such sweet, soft weather, you will forget it is
'December, by the sea-side! and fancy the breezes of
'Spring have come back *again*;—with the violets and
'primroses in their train.' Being at Hastings, his young correspondent is adjured to 'visit the Field
'where England was lost and won: where the noble
'Harold fell; and where, in the cold dews of the
'night, his faithful wife and Queen sought him.'

Later, (*Dec. 26th*), he tells her, her 'kind little
'Song of invitation to the sea-side is almost as diffi-
'cult to be resisted as the Song of the Sirens, by
'Ulysses. Like them, you paint the glories of
'the scene:'—'and in golden hues,—Tyrian hues
'of purple and ultramarine. But, like Ulysses, I
'must be tied to the mast, and tell my mates to row
'more swiftly. * * I certainly should like:—but
'it is altogether impossible. I have another Bas-
'relief of *River Deities* to do, if possible, before New
'Year's Day.'

Etty's manner with Children answered to the gentleness and simplicity of the man. A pretty child was sure to win a friendly word: the Artist laying a large, kindly hand on the golden head, and looking down on the innocent face with the thoughts of a Painter. At the Baths he was wont to frequent, was a little girl, who in time grew to be a young woman; as little girls must. But to the last, the fatherly pat on the head, and injunction to 'Be a good little girl!' were as regu-

larly bestowed as ever. In York streets, once, an acquaintance observed the Painter busy eating cherries: then, meeting a flaxen-haired little child, stoop down, take off her hat, and put in some cherries; to her present wonder and speedy delight. A pleasant Picture to think of, that group makes; under the antique over-hanging Clock of Coney Street: the little one looking up in open-eyed wonder, the old man stooping to her with kind simplicity of mien.

One of the first works wherewith Etty had commenced the working season, had been *The Three Graces*. *October 5th*, as the Diary records, he 'began to get in the great lines of the *Joan of Arc*:'—at last. To Mr. Spencer, whose 'very kind, friendly, 'and feeling letter,' demands 'the sacrifice of a few 'minutes of November daylight, precious as it is,' the Painter gave, (*Nov. 14th*), some details as to Pictures in progress. 'The Sketch,' he reports,—'the bit of 'Poor Man's Friend—will fill up admirably the back-'ground of a *Female Bather* I have in hand; and be 'very appropriate.' The Poor Man's Friend was a *sobriquet* for the Pond he had sketched, in his friend's grounds, whereof the origin enhanced to him its natural charms; and conferred on the spot a sentiment. Its formation had, during one hard winter, kept many poor families out of the Union. The story was a favourite with the Painter; allusions to it frequent with him. The *Bather* referred to,—'At the 'doubtful breeze alarmed,' his first *Musidora* piece,—and one of his most beautiful,—was exhibited at the following Academy-Exhibition; and bought by Mr. Knott, for seventy guineas. At Mr. Knott's Sale,

a few years later, it changed hands for two hundred and twenty-five guineas; and has since realized *four* hundred. Another Picture of *Bathers* was executed earlier in the season, for the British Institution: a charming little Picture, *Confidence and Diffidence*,—Two Nymphs Bathing. Originally obtained by Mr. Colls for seventy guineas; its last price, in 1852, amounted to about three hundred.

'*Jeanne d'Arc*,' continues Etty, (*November 14th, still*), 'is begun in charcoal;—sketched on all three 'canvasses.' But he has 'varied interruptions,' a continued demand 'for other things.'—'She keeps her 'place in my best affections. When the triple Epics 'are completed, triple thanks to God for sustaining 'me, will break forth from my heart's fountain.—'"The night cometh:" and I must work while it is 'day; lest I be weighed in the balance like Belshazzar, 'and found wanting.'

The remedy with Etty for all ills and sorrows,—when they came, was ever fresh exertion:—'work, the 'primeval curse, as some call it; but I don't,' he would affirm. 'For, constituted as we are, occupa-'tion is the best remedy for "blues" and *ennui*.' He was soon to have need of his 'Remedy.'

'Sorrowful unto death,' is an entry in the Diary, (*November 2nd*), pointing to thoughts of widely different complexion from those occurring to mind in his last to Mr. Spencer. Within less than a year after the death of Sydney Taylor, he received tidings of the loss of another dear friend: with whom, community of taste and feeling had drawn him into still closer ties of intimacy,—Mr. John Harper. Amiable,

modest, gifted, enthusiastic, and admiring; warmly devoted to Art and to Etty, and a lover of Antiquities, he had rapidly become beloved and indispensable. Though much younger than himself, an intimate of comparatively late standing, he was the Painter's confidential friend, sympathiser, and, when they met, bosom companion. 'I loved him as a Brother,' writes Etty. The news of his sudden death affected the latter to tears: for many days made him 'almost unfit for anything,'—even for work, at first.

A Traveller in Italy, ardent in the study of Art and of Nature, eager to avail himself of the opportunities that country afforded him, Mr. Harper had caught the Malaria fever in Rome. While yet recovering from the attack, a rough sea voyage to Naples had brought on a relapse. And in Naples he died, October, 1842: in his thirty-fourth year. 'Active, 'zealous, and enterprising,' wrote Etty to the *Morning Herald*, 'he sank under his enthusiasm for 'Art. * * Absorbed in his pursuit, he had neglected 'the precautions made necessary by the climate.'

'We had conceived,' confesses Etty to a friend, 'the 'danger past. And therefore, it came with a more 'withering blow.—I was flattering myself what plea- 'sure I should have in welcoming him home;' in hearing him 'recount his perils and exertions.' * * 'To say that he is an irreparable loss to dear York, is 'saying too little. I think the loss of John Harper 'a *National* loss. His talents were only equalled by 'the great and good qualities of that dear heart, 'whose pulsations the Almighty has thought fit to 'arrest; only that He may bring him nearer to Him-

'self, the source of all that is great and good: where 'we shall hope to meet.' * * 'For myself, I 'know of no one scarcely, that can supply his place:— 'ever ready at a word to anything great, good, or 'benevolent; with a feeling for Art and knowledge 'of it that falls to the lot of few, even of its most 'eminent Professors.'—'His only fault,' the 'ardour 'too great for the fragile form that held it.'

'I had fondly looked,' (*writing at the close of the year*), 'to the time of my living entirely at York: 'being sure of the society and co-operation of one 'whose heart and hand entered most warmly into my 'own aims and feelings!'—He had looked forward, also, to the delight and interest his young comrade would have taken, and the service have rendered to the long-desiderated School of Design: set going at York in his absence.

His friend's talents for the practice of Art, Etty estimated highly. 'Art,' affirmed the latter, 'was in him intuitive.' His Sketches,—amateur performances, wherein the real bent of his genius had free play: Sketches of 'Scenery, Antiquity, 'and Architecture, are, in taste, facile elegant exe- 'cution, and correct detail,—of the first rank.' A volume of such, the fruits of his few months' stay in Italy, (he had before only made made a few Studies of Architecture in York, of Landscape among the Lakes), I have myself had an opportunity of hastily examining: and can testify to their suggestiveness, their fidelity of detail, their refined feeling, delicacy and grace of pencil, and sweetness of colour. They have elicited admiration from a Painter, among

others, whose opinion on such a point carries weight with it,—Stanfield: who, in many instances, has not hesitated to prefer the Amateur's point of view and treatment to his own, of the same spots; and has painted a fine Picture from one of them. Etty glanced over these last memorials of his friend but once: the regrets their very excellence excited, counterbalancing all other feelings.

By profession an Architect, foremost in repute at the time, of any in York, Mr. Harper 'left specimens 'of his skill' in that department: in Yorkshire and Lancashire. The 'Proprietary School at Clifton,' York, and the 'Roman Catholic Church at Bury,' are cited as among the best. Unhappily, the 'lost Art,' (or slumbering), Architecture as now practised,—far gone in imbecility, in helpless Dilettantism, spasmodic mimicry,—affords little opportunity for individual genius or talent to leave an impress of itself; or to achieve anything honest or real. As a Painter,—and a Landscape Painter, Mr. Harper's refined eye and skilful hand would have had fairer scope.

At the period of his first grief for the loss of his Friend, Etty had a question to bring forward at the Academy. Of the share ordinarily taken by him in the Academy's proceedings, Mr. Leslie has given a similar account to that of Mr. Dyce in respect to the School of Design.—'Naturally shy, he never spoke at 'our Meetings without a great effort; yet, never was 'silent on any occasion on which he thought he could 'serve the Institution.' Unremittingly constant to his place at the Council Board, he could only when strongly excited, assume a prominent part in the

transactions whereat he "assisted" by his presence. Roused by a topic on which he felt warmly, and one he understood, he would,—after preparation,—express himself with vehemence and energy; and in general, carry his point. A characteristic instance occurred at a Council Meeting, in November, 1842, when he with much spirit, proposed, and carried, a motion for removing Half-length Portraits at the Exhibition, from 'Below the line.' No great matter, it may be said. Listen to Etty! He had his reasons:—sympathy with practitioners in his own line of Art; whose difficulties he understood by experience. Success had not dulled his fellow-feeling. I quote from a draft of the intended Speech; premising that the new rule, according this conspicuous place to Portraits, was only in force as to those of 'Royal 'Personages,' by whomsoever painted: a Courtier-like complaisance.

Disclaiming any 'disrespect' for Royal Personages, or for Painters of such subjects, he (justly), thinks their Portraits would look 'as well or better' on the line. But 'this year, two such had been hung below 'the line:' 'last year,' two. 'Suppose three or 'four more Royal Persons sit to as many Artists: 'that the Pictures are not bad enough to be rejected, 'and are by the present *etiquette* hung in the cen-'tral and principal places.—Those Pictures which, by 'right of talent, subject, and rank, *ought* to be there, 'are thrust into the second-rate places;—those that 'ought to occupy the second, into the third: and so 'on. A general embarrassment of the arrangements 'ensues.'

Being a man of imagination and some simplicity, he 'conceives the Academy' to be 'the Guardian of 'the Arts of this Country.' He thinks,—what Academic practice give him so much ground for thinking,—'its Duty is to protect the interests, not only 'of those who have made their way to its honours, 'through all the lets and hinderances that may have 'beset them;' but *also* of 'those young men de-'sirous to cultivate the higher classes of Art, whom 'it educates with so much care, and so much cost:' —to give 'their promising maiden efforts a chance 'of being seen and heard of, in this great struggle for 'places; and not, as you yourself,' (Mr. President!), 'beautifully say, "bring forth buds to perish," by put-'ting their efforts into the Octagon Room, or the 'upper line above the Architectural Drawings; or 'perhaps, out altogether, with a printed apology "for 'want of room."'

The sale at the close of the year of his large Picture, *The Dance*, from Homer, though, as already stated, at a reduced price; puts the Painter 'in good 'spirits.' Of which commodity his stock had run low: a consummation much aggravated, as he now confesses, by so important a work having hung on hand.—'A year productive of great blessings, and 'great privations,' sums up Etty, at the close of his Diary for 1842. His Pictures had sold; the York School of Design been set going. But dear and valued friends had been lost.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONTRASTS OF FORTUNE. 1843-44. (ÆT. 56-57.)

Varied Employments—Ready Recognition of Fellow-Artists—A Brother from Java—Fresco—Commission from a Prince—An Ungrateful Task—Sunshine—Trip to France: Rouen—Paris—Orleans—Vestiges of 'The Maid'—Last Studies in the Louvre—Favoured Friends: Givendale—Happy Scenes—Full Receipts—August Disapprobation—'Finish' *versus* Imagination—Renewed Efforts in Fresco—The *Hesperus*—Its Fate—Increased Industry—Favourite Lodgings—York: Incidents—Edinburgh: an Ovation—Address to York Students.

By March, 1843, the Painter was busied on his *Entombment of Christ;* gaining admission from Liston to the Dissecting-room and Dead-house of University Hospital: there to select an object of study for his Picture.

At this same time, he was busily working on the *Three Graces*. As usual at this period of the year, Model swiftly succeeded to Model, in his Studio: one of the 'Graces' giving place, after her hour or two hours were up, to a 'strapping Life-Guardsman' for the *Entombment;* and so on. One day, a friend sitting by, remarks on the costly nature of this kind of assistance.—'Ah!' characteristically replied Etty, 'they take a deal of the gilt off the gingerbread!' A metaphor, often on the Painter's lips, borrowed from early experiences under the roof of the Spice-Maker. In the zenith of his

fame, when Wealth and Rank condescended to recognise the Man of Genius as their equal,—at all events, as no derogatory associate,—he forbore not such hazardous allusions. In which fact, an admiring friend sees cause to conclude here was 'a man not 'ashamed' of his humble origin. The true wonder would have been, had any other feeling than pride in it found place in the mind of a man like Etty: whose claims were intrinsic, not extrinsic; a man based on reality,—no quack or pretender, nor the proxy or blank counter for a *bonâ fide* 'Notable.'

The miscellaneous employments of his time were, this Spring, augmented by his appointment as one of the professional 'judges,' in the approaching competition at Westminster Hall. At the Central School of Design, his post had proved an unsatisfactory one; the breach growing daily wider between the Director (Dyce) and the Council of amateur gentlemen and busybodies: who, among other crotchets, required of an eminent Painter that he should forsake his calling, and teach a knowledge of the Figure, *without* keeping up his own knowledge of it, or practice of his Art.

Among the Pictures of the season, *The Flemish Courtship*, a reminiscence of Flemish Travel, assisted, as we have seen, by authentic accessories picked up abroad; and commenced in the previous year; was painted in a clear, firm style; such as was now getting rare with the Painter. The success of the present year was less qualified than that of the past. All his numerous Pictures for the Academy were sold, before leaving his Studio: the *Entombment*

of Christ, the *Infant Moses and his Mother*, the *Graces*, (first of that subject), in which the figures of Psyche and of Cupid,—Cupid looking up in flushed admiration,—are so fine; and lastly, *In the Greenwood Shade*, a Sketch of Givendale Landscape. At the Academy's Private View, numerous offers to purchase followed:—too late. An equally ready Demand had carried off his *Bathers* at the British Institution, his studies of *Fruit*, and *Game*, *On the Thames*, &c. The Dealers were eagerly buying his Academy Studies, and tempting him to convert Studies into Pictures. And already, he can boast 'almost £100 a year in the Three per Cents.'

Where Etty's admiration was excited by a fellow-Artist's achievement, he grudged not to confess it. In this year's Exhibition, a Picture by a non-Academician, a friend and, some time 'Patron,' (first buyer of the *Combat*), drew from him a congratulatory letter, expressing frank admiration:—admiration, greater than a lover of Nature can well understand, who does *not* account imagination and *Fancy*, imagination and falsification of Nature, synonymous. 'I cannot resist congratulating you,' he tells Mr. Maclise, 'on your noble Picture from Gray's *Elegy*, 'embodying as it does, most magnificently and successfully, the touching sentiment of that sweet 'poem:—the light lingering on the mountain top,' (or hill-top?), 'as loth to leave so beautiful a scene!'

In a Letter of uncertain date, another Landscape-Painter and friend,—on whose merits we are all pretty unanimous,—Stanfield, thanks Etty for spontaneous praise of one of his Pictures: had he been 'at the

'Academy last night,' would 'have made you my 'best bow for your very flattering epistle. There is 'nothing so gratifying to the feelings of a Painter as 'the praise of his brothers in the Art.'—'Approbation 'from Sir Hubart Stanly "is praise indeed:"—*vide* '*A Cure for the Heart-Ache.*'

May 29th, 1843, is marked in Etty's Diary: 'a 'day memorable in our life. Dear Charles, my 'youngest brother, arrived from Java:' unexpectedly, and after an absence, as sailor and sugar-planter, of thirty-one years. On the Painter's return one evening, from the Academy, where, for a wonder, he had not stayed, he found the welcome stranger in his house. Of Captain Etty, a rough, sea-faring man,—a hearty and honest, the Painter had hitherto known little; inevitably. His own Brother was a new acquaintance to him. This Brother's pursuits, very different from his own, had been almost equally successful. 'For years he has ploughed the bosom of the ocean,' floridly recounts Etty, in his subsequent Edinburgh Speech: 'has awed the Pirates of the Batavian seas; 'has tracked the Tiger, and bearded him in his 'forest-lair.'—A 'hero-kind of man,' admirers describe him: a man of original character, as of practical energy. While the Painter was yet struggling to learn the grammar of his Art, under his Uncle William's protection, his younger Brother,—sent out into the world as a stripling,—had made his six voyages to India. 'In one of which, they fought the *La* '*Forte* French Frigate of forty-four guns; and *he* was 'complimented by his Captain on his bravery.' He rose to be Captain himself, (in the Merchant service);

ultimately settling as Sugar-planter in Java. In which latter capacity, turning to good account his native sagacity, his clever mechanical turn also stood him in stead: a bias, whereof mention has been made as characterising more than one member of the family. Prosperous and enterprising, he was now enabled to invest large sums in English machinery, a valuable import in Java; and, like his gifted Brother, to entertain floating thoughts, (not then to be fulfilled), of 'a house in York,' and ultimate retirement thither.

An employment engrossing a good deal of Etty's time, at this period, calling him off from more legitimate pursuits, was the Study of Fresco: the technical minutiæ of its practice. In the course of his experiments, he applied for information from those learned in the theory of the subject,—Dyce, Eastlake, &c.: who advised as to the Colours to be used, the manipulations requisite, &c.

The revival of Fresco,—already a stale marvel in Germany,—was the artistic wonder of the hour in England: over which deluded persons were raising their prolonged cackle, as of a new Epoch for the British School, and rehabilitation of Art itself. Under the impetus of alien influences, and of a petty, pedantic taste, the novelty was engrossing far more attention than it could ever repay: in a School whereof the chief triumphs had been attained in precisely opposite directions. As far as Etty was concerned,—and some others,—the time thus devoted may be reckoned so much lost to Art. A characteristic feat of an inane Dilettantism,—vain Idling which busies itself about nothing, mistakes trifles for things of moment, lays

stress on externals at the expense of essentials, pins its faith, (ignoring the *Man*), on the *tools*, on some special, outward appliance or other,—was this of cajoling gifted men and a whole School of Artists to relinquish the method of painting, (and a good one), in which they were versed, for another, and antiquated one, whereof they knew nothing. It flatters such 'Patronage,'—weak, meddlesome, mischievous,—to think, by commanding a substitution of one vessel for another, or a change of vesture, something has been actually done for Art and Artists.

The Fresco demanded of Etty was one of a series to decorate the 'new Summer Temple' in Buckingham Palace Gardens:—'a rustic octagon on an artificial 'hill,' as the Newspapers describe it. Eight Painters of established repute, including Leslie, Stanfield, Maclise, Eastlake, Uwins, and Sir William Ross,—a various band,—were charged with their execution, by Prince Albert: one of the earliest public acts of that Prince's reign. A commission this, as Etty was concerned, destined to entail nothing but vexation and loss on the Painter:—no additional credit on his 'distinguished Patron.'

On the 8th of May, Etty had received 'His 'Royal Highness's commands,' to paint one of the compartments in this 'rustic octagon on an artificial 'hill.' After applying 'to Mr. Eastlake for particular 'instructions,' as he subsequently relates, he 'made 'Sketches of two or three compositions from *Comus*.' Selecting the one he 'thought best on the whole,'—*Circe and the Sirens Three*, July 11th, he reluctantly commenced on the Fresco: 'not expecting to succeed,'

as he had assured 'His Royal Highness' on receiving the commission; 'being unacquainted with the prac-'tice of Fresco.' 'In about a week or more,' he 'got 'it all in; pulling down a portion and repainting it.' The corner-Sylphs were painted at home, and put up afterwards; and were in execution the most successful portions, as in conception the most imaginative.

His Diary illustrates his anxieties and vacillations during the progress of the work.—*July* 15*th*: 'Visit 'and praise from the Queen.'—17*th*: 'To the Palace 'soon after nine; pulled down first Fresco figure, 'repainted it and cut.'—19*th*: 'At nine, at the Palace, 'with egg and size; retouched all day: from nine 'till seven.'—21*st*: 'Finished the Fresco, I hope.'—Not quite.—28*th*: 'Again paint Fresco.' A fellow-Artist remembers meeting him one of these summer evenings, in St. James's Park; returning from his long day's work at the Pimlico Summer-house: and how he fell into talk of the 'great difficulties' he had had to encounter in Fresco-painting.

Throughout it proved an ungrateful task,—alien to long-confirmed habits, and familiar predilections: a task wherein his real mastery of hand could find little scope. It was not a style for the great Colourist; who, as Mr. Frost well describes, 'obtained his effects 'by passing a glaze over a *solid* painting and, *when* '*dry*, a *scumble* of opaque colour over that; when dry again, a glaze here and there, &c. &c.:' a process directly opposite to that of Fresco; which must be painted *at once*, while the plaster is *fresco* (fresh). A style eminently suited, is the latter, to the Germans; who are *not* Colourists. Fresco-painters never

could be, in the sense in which Titian, Rubens, and Etty are: though they might, (but in modern times do not), try to approximate towards the sweet and tender feeling in Colour, as in all things else, of the early Schools; of Perugino, of Francia, of Raffaello.

'Etty,' says Mr. Maclise, 'disliked Fresco-painting; 'and seemed careless to submit to the conditions 'of its peculiar practice. In the Pavilion at Buck- 'ingham Palace, I have seen him touch upon the dry 'plaster,—not the fresh portion on which he was to 'perform his day's work,—but the dry part of the 'previous day's. Of course, such work was not ab- 'sorbed, and therefore useless. His habit in the 'practice of his Art was not methodical enough to 'submit to the trammels of Fresco.'

It was, in fact, rather too late in the day with him.

His very proficiency in oils, joined to the late age at which he was dragged into the Study, hindered his attaining equal mastery in the technic requisites of Fresco manipulation, with several younger and some inferior Painters. A singularly felicitous mode of honouring a grey-headed Master, and of recognising his supremacy in his Art, was this, of sending him to School again, with supercilious condescension; to learn the elements of a (to him) new mode of practice:—instead of eliciting from him the best he could do in his own. This puerile invention of an 'Enlightened Taste,'—'Taste' insensible to Genius, and intrinsically ignorant,—such idle waste and frittering away over Fresco experiments, of the time and powers of the greatest Colourist of his age, reminds one of the image

in Snow exacted from Michæl Angelo, by an ignoble Duke of Florence.

The prospective retirement to York had already as a poetic dream, taken firm footing in Etty's mind. His friend, Mr. Edward Harper, having reported a suitable house adjoining the City-Walls, and in the close neighbourhood of the Minster:—'Yours to me,'—had replied Etty, (*July 21st*),—'has 'in it such a true bit of sunshine, that, though I am 'now going to the Palace to my Fresco, I cannot resist 'thanking you for it. When I read it, I almost 'screamed with delight. Miss Etty thought, I dare 'say, I was beside myself. The thought of mount-'ing a bit of the sacred rampart of dear old York, 'and seeing the Minster therefrom,—a Yorkshire 'Claude, a Poussin, a Cuyp,—was rapturous:' and of 'feeling the sacred homefelt delight that I was 'anchored there for life.'—'Thank you and Doctor 'Simpson for the brilliant thought. It would, 'indeed, be,' &c. 'On one side, Alma Mater, 'our dear Cathedral; on the other, the Walls and 'the glories of the Setting Sun. * * Happy 'Willy Etty, in the thought of living in dear Old 'York, and near such friends as you and the Doctor.'

August 12th, writing to his constant Correspondent (of late years), Mr. Wethered, he tells him:—'I have got a Sketch of a Golden Apple,—not of 'the Hesperides, but one I picked up in Lambeth;—'such a nice colour, that I painted it with a grape 'or two to carry off the colour, *en Vignette*, on a 'white board: which I shall give you, as another '*souvenir*.'

After a long season of hard and various work, Etty took a fresh step preparatory to the *Joan of Arc;* that of visiting the authentic scenes of her Story. *Aug.* 16*th,* he left London with his friend Wood; embarking at evening from Shoreham.

'The Sun's glorious and golden disk,'—he afterwards recounts,—'soon dipped its head in the green 'sea. The Moon rose, and the beautiful Stars; and 'at last, the revolving light of Dieppe:—tantalizing us 'a long time.' To which ensues, when 'French 'vigilance' has done 'spelling the passports by lan-'tern light,' the 'chilly amusement after being 'across seas,' of ascending and descending in the foggy night 'a steep ladder, where you had diffi-'culty in not slipping through, and breaking your 'legs:' running to and fro betwixt *Douanier* and luggage. In Dieppe, where 'a place to lay our 'heads was hardly to be had,' 'we at last got two 'beds made up in a billiard-room:' awakening next morning in astonishment, to 'find ourselves in an 'immense room, with lamps and rafters running in 'perspective;'—'our inn, a fine old French Mansion, 'of the olden time.'

On the way to Rouen,—the way hilly, and 'the day 'very hot,'—'hot as Italy,' 'our Rosinante, like a 'true ambitious horse, did not like going down hill. 'On a tremendous' descent,—'I have it now before 'my mind's eye,—crack goes an important strap of 'his harness! And he begins kicking like a Fury. '* * Well! here we were:—a long down-hill; 'an equally long up-hill, with, of course, *another* 'down-hill at t'other side.'—'It seemed impos-

'sible to reach our destination, (about thirty-five 'miles), that night.' Matters mend, however. And the evening witnesses their landing on 'the *Quai* '*Havre* at Rouen; where, just before the window, 'was a beautiful ship moored, taking in her cargo:— 'called "Jeanne d'Arc."'

At Rouen, he examined, with more attention than on previous visits, the old Market-Place where his Heroine was burned:—where stands 'a Statue to her 'memory,' and 'a fountain runs.'—'I filled my 'little water-bottle and drank of the stream myself; 'went to the Cathedral and the Church of St. Ouen, 'which is indeed lovely:—such simple, chaste, pure 'Gothic,—like York Minster.'—A 'finer thing than 'even the Cathedral at Rouen itself.'

Thus much, from Paris, (*Aug. 20th*), to his Niece: whom, 'if anything can make dearer,—which is 'next to impossible,—it is,' that he is far away.

Paris, 'gay, lively, extraordinary,'—with its imposing Public Works and Galleries,—impresses him more favourably than before; though still reminding him, in 'its gaiety and whirl,' 'of Bunyan's "Vanity Fair."' As 'an intelligent friend' tells him, "you 'feel as at a Ball, and desirous to get home,—though 'late in the morning."' A place he has often visited 'with advantage to his Art,' is Paris; 'but would not 'like to live in: as in London, or in York,—dear old 'York.'

Since his last visit of 1830, 'they have improved' it, 'by grand fountains in the *Place Louis Quinze*, '*trottoirs* in the streets,' &c.; have made the Louvre a greater marvel than ever: 'so that there now seems

'no end of it.' And the French are candidly confessed 'to be a very clever, ingenious people, and to 'do extraordinary things.'

On *the* 19*th*, 'to the Statue Gallery in the 'Louvre,' and sketched; afterwards, 'with my friend 'Bishop Luscombe' 'saw the Spanish Pictures, and 'the wonderful accessions they have made.'

On *the* 22*nd*, he is *painting* in the Louvre,—and from his chosen Masters, the Venetians, as usual: 'making a Sketch of Mrs. Titian, and Master hold-'ing her the glass to see her nice face,—one much 'like your Titian face,' (*to Mr. Spencer*).

The 23*rd* finds him 'in the middle of France,' at the goal of his Pilgrimage: the ancient 'City of 'Orleans, Banks of the Loire.' Whence, he commences with an emphasis, accounts of his experiences: to his brother Walter, and to Mr. Spencer; accounts which vary little in substance, and are here woven into one.

Standing on the very spot signalized 'by the 'Maid,' 'where she fought and conquered,'—'ground 'sanctified by her piety and patriotism;'—he 'hopes 'to catch a ray of inspiration' for his 'intended 'Trio:' and, (with better reason), to get 'informa-'tion that will be useful' to the same.

'I crossed the River to-day,' (*Aug.* 23*rd*), 'over 'which she rode triumphantly into the City, with 'her convoy of provisions; and relieved the starving 'citizens.' * * A fine wide 'river, the Loire at 'Orleans:' but now 'turbid with rain and wind;' the weather being 'stormy, like the times of poor 'Joan.'

Seeking whatever may remain 'appertaining to 'her or her exploits,' he has cause to complain, 'there 'is not much.' The '*Improvers* have been busy. And 'scarce a vestige remains of either the old Bridge or 'old Cathedral.' 'What animals,' cries he, 'these 'Corporation men often are: to destroy the only 'existing memorials of their glory!' He has, however, 'got a 'better notion of the situation, and other 'curious and interesting particulars; so does not,' (addressing his Brother), 'consider his labour in 'vain.'

Subsequently, more memorials of Joan were encountered than had at first been anticipated. He 'found fragments of the old Wall, but all the Gates or 'Bars gone:' dived into 'the dark cellars of a Cabaret, 'where are the only remains of the old Bridge she 'crossed in triumph;' and 'saw the arches of the 'rings to which they then attached the' [illegible]. Of the Cathedral, 'mostly more modern than Joan's 'time, some parts round the Choir seem the same' as that in which she 'went to return thanks;' after having 'brought in the convoy and raised the Siege. 'It was something to know you were on the spot 'where this Heroine trod, and exerted herself in the 'cause of her country.'

'An old painted Banner,' was also fallen in with; 'which used to be carried in civic procession:—where 'she is painted kneeling;' also, 'the Virgin Mary and 'Christ, and a view of the old Town on the other 'side. Which' latter 'will be useful.' An 'ingenious' and 'respectable' tradesman, at once farrier and 'a 'sort of Antiquarian,' had 'preserved this old Banner

'of the Maid;' and gave the Painter a 'little book 'of the matter.'

'Another view' 'of the Town as it was,' he saw 'in the Town-hall: with the Walls, Gates, and old 'Cathedral standing.'

After two days and a stormy night in Orleans,—such 'a windy night Mr. Wood and myself could scarcely sleep,'—he returned to Paris, 'well tired:' content, 'on the whole, to have come so far,' and to have 'witnessed and sketched some of the scenes' of his Heroine's exploits.

In Paris, he and his friend, with whom, reports Etty, 'I get on capitally,—he is very kind and 'good;'—spent several additional days. 'Painting 'and drawing in the Louvre,'—for the last time, as it proved,—Etty has his hands full, of business and pleasure: 'dining several times' with his old friend, Bishop Luscombe, 'at his beautiful residence in the 'Champs Elysées;' and 'witnessing their' (the French) 'wonderful exertions in the Arts.' He visits 'the 'Tombs of the Kings, and the Cathedral of St. Denis;' visits the 'superb Palace and Gardens of Versailles: 'seeing the *grandes eaux* play, to the delight of 'thousands;' wondering at the 'prodigious Gallery,' admitting Vernet's Battles, &c., to be 'very powerful, full of genius and 'talent.' Finally, one night, he occupies a pit-stall 'at the *Opéra Français*: the 'Ballet and whole Spectacle superb.'

'A time of severe exertion:' wherein he 'got 'through a great deal,' under 'the Sun of France, 'whose power,'—&c. 'The heat, the rain, the whirl

'of Paris,' make him 'long for a little rest;' after the much done and seen.

At the end of a fortnight's absence, the sight of 'our own beautiful Island hanging over the blue 'Ocean, breasting it with her *albe* cliffs;' sight of 'the nibbling flocks of sheep cropping the grass in 'the happy valleys near Folkestone,' 'under a beau-'tiful sunny sky;' make him, as of old, 'happy that 'England' is 'his country.' September finds him in his own Home, 'improved in knowledge and in 'health,'—for French 'living and wines well agree 'with him:'—but with a 'little of the fever of a long 'journey and a great exertion' on him, and 'the 'whirl of the Folkestone Railway hardly out of his 'head.' Before resuming more familiar labours, he amuses his fatigue by announcing himself to more than one friend, as 'red-hot from France;' and by recounting how, among other achievements, he had lately been sketching 'from the Antique, in the cool 'marble Halls' of the Louvre, 'looking out on green 'trees,—quite a treat:'—sketching, 'and painting.' Which latter 'was hotter work: the Long Gallery 'closer and warmer.' He had made, in all, three 'small Oil Studies: a small Sketch of *Titian and* '*his Mistress*, a bit of *Paolo*, and an Italian Costume 'of Victor Carpaggio, an old Venetian.'

During the Autumn of 1843, Etty applied himself to small Pictures for his friends, the Dealers,—Colls, Wethered, &c.; who have, he tells them, 'a glut-'tonous appetite:' continuing, with the sums realized, to buy 'Stock.' The two gentlemen just mentioned

were two among the principal engrossers of his works, in these years. Vice-Chancellor Wigram, Mr. Knott, Mr. Serjeant Thompson, had for some time been frequenters of his Studio, and purchasers. At a distance, in Liverpool and Birmingham, were many others: at the latter place, Messrs. Bullock, Birch, Roberts, and, above all, Mr. Gillott; the weight of whose purse, and his frequent presence in London, enabled him to distance all the rest.

A visit to Mr. Gillott was in this and subsequent years added to the prescriptive York one, as a regular item in the programme of annual recreation. His hospitable friends the Singletons, at Givendale, had been previously enrolled on the brief list of those with whom Etty delighted to pass a few days of relaxation. During the last ten years of his life, the peaceful hours there spent, free from constraint and ceremony; —and he cared not to visit where he was not wholly at his ease and master of his liberty;—numbered among the happiest of his yearly retirement.

Pleasantly situate on the south-west edge of the East Riding Wolds, commanding the Valley of York, this part of his native County, quite distinct from more familiar parts of it, yet distant only a mile or two from scenes known to his boyhood,—Pocklington, Hayton, &c.,—came to be equally dear, though its acquaintance was made late.

'Sweet Givendale, thy Vale of Peace,'

is the commencement of a quatrain of verse from Etty's hand. In florid prose, an excerpt from a Letter to his Niece of uncertain date, may represent divers like: celebrating Autumnal pleasures there.

'*Givendale* was looking lovely. Sweet shone the 'Sun on the green slopes and uplands. Soft sailed 'the fleecy clouds; and fanned the trees, the zephyrs. 'Quietly grazed the cows and the sheep. The brooks 'tumbled their crystal water over the pebbles in the 'valley. Peace seemed to reign. The crows sailed 'over our heads. The white doves shone in the sun-'shine. The blackbirds and robins shot across the 'lawn; and whistled their autumnal song. The little 'Church lay snug on the hill-side.—And the Fish-'ponds are in capital trim.'

The abode of his friends lay close to one of the little lateral valleys which abound in these Yorkshire Wolds,—as in all hill countries:—a secluded, somewhat bare, but verdant dale. Within which, at one end, was embosomed, when Etty knew it, a small Norman Church (a Nave *only*), with red roof and gabled bell-cot; simple, picturesque, homogeneous with the simple scene, (as the handiwork of our ancestors is ever): since replaced by an erection in the Churchwarden style, which size and position do somewhat to save from utter irrelevance. Of this favourite scene, —'the Happy Valley,' as he loved to call it,—the Painter never tired. Here, after sitting and chatting freely with his hostess, or after escaping from the Table,—for long after-dinner sessions were his aversion:—here he liked to walk, enjoying the peace and serenity of Nature. Here too, he often sketched. Along this valley nestled two Fish-ponds: a sketch of one of which, Etty,—introducing some boys, &c.,—exhibited in 1843, under the title, *In the Greenwood Shade*. The Garden again, and a seat at its end, were

favourite retreats: from which post, on the brow of the hill, may be caught a noble panorama: stretching in one direction, (southward), to the far-spreading Humber;—Howden and Goole Church-towers visible on a clear day, and to the East, the grander towers of 'Dear York' itself. A more manageable scene to his right, (as he sat), the Painter sketched:—pasture with its sheep, and fine trees, in the foreground; a gap in the trees revealing a glimpse of the distant landscape. From the garden, sometimes begging a flower or two, specially deep and brilliant in hue: of these he would make his 'Studies in Colour.' Once, he got up a little Exhibition in his room, of sketches from Givendale scenes and Givendale 'still-life:'—deep toned blue-bell, convolvulus, poppies, brilliant dragon-fly, and the like; drawing up a sportive Catalogue, and inviting the family to a 'Private view.'

The receipts of 1843 enabled the Painter to add many a hundred to the 'Etty Fund.' His Pictures dispersed as fast as he could produce them. Few were painted selling for large sums: only two (the *Entombment* and the *Graces*), for as much as two hundred guineas; another, (*Flemish Courtship*), for one hundred. The total incomings,—mainly realized by an aggregate of smaller Works and Studies,—amounted to some £1300; according to loose occasional entries in the Diary: in reality to more, probably.

This year appears to me the first, in which Fame and Fortune,—long with their usual caprice wavering,—fairly lighted on Etty; in such proportions as his works had intrinsically for nearly twenty years merited. His Reputation had risen as high as it

ever did, until the great access received from the Exhibition of his Works in 1849. He and his were much courted. It had become a matter of favour to secure a Picture direct from his Studio. Large sums are said to have been proffered for the supposed secrets of his practice:—had there been any to sell them. Noble Lords and busy Statesmen paid him the compliment of occupying his time, by flattering visits to his Studio; among others in this year, Sir Robert Peel and Lord Lansdowne: whom, says a privileged intimate, he received to a 'lunch of beef 'and porter;' though 'he *might* have given a glass 'of good port, which he always had for a friend, and 'would bring out in pint bottles.'

February, 1844, found Etty again at work for the 'Rustic Octagon.' The Fresco of *Circe, and the Sirens Three,* was one instinct with poetic feeling,—with grace and beauty; in all higher respects a noble work: but no model Fresco technically, no 'perfect 'monster,'—coldly correct and unexceptionally dull. Nor was it highly finished. The inequality of finish was a result due, partly to the tendency of Etty's latter practice generally,—that of gaining unexampled splendour and vigour of effect by few and bold touches; in part, to those habits, long familiarity and long mastery in oils had rendered incurable:—those despairing and forgetful touches on the dry plaster, (utterly futile), mentioned by Mr. Maclise. For Etty's mode of painting,—the reverse of neat; no plodding effort of merely dexterous craftmanship;—was at once swift, impulsive, and pondering,—*à plusieurs reprises,* to use an apt Gallicism.

The original understanding, moreover, as to these Frescos was, that they were *experiments*. And the remuneration ultimately accorded by the experimentalizing Patron,—£10, is not that for which English gentlemen expect to secure important imaginative works from artists of eminence: far less *finished* Pictures of importance. Under such open-handed encouragement, no fortunes, it is plain, will be made: if so much, indeed, as rent and taxes paid. That a Prince Consort, himself salaried on the *English* scale, should remunerate English painters according to a *German* schedule of prices, was by some considered anomalous. The tentative nature of the undertaking has been pleaded as an excuse: one, however, which implies the experiment to have been made, (as in fact it was), at the Painters', not the Princely Patron's cost.

Mr. Maclise, a younger and, on system, more elaborate painter, had made the Prince Consort a free gift of very careful finish on *his* Fresco. Etty's therefore, by its juxtaposition, suffered:—at a superficial glance, and in eyes better qualified to judge of 'the accurate making-out of the parts,' than of 'Colour and general effect;' of mechanism, than of imaginative feeling or creative power. An uneducated —or superficially educated—Taste cannot understand a Picture deficient in finish; is only appealed to by something smooth and neat. To blunt perceptions, the elaborate finish of a Tea-board or a Winterhalter counts for more than the poetic thought boldly dashed in by inspired hands, in all the glow of fervid genius.

One of Etty's fellow-labourers beneath the frigid sunshine of august Patronage *not* regardless of expense, himself sincerely admiring the 'beauty of 'parts of what' Etty called his 'experiment,' and the 'perfect harmony of Colour,'—'breadth and harmony, 'beating the rest of us hollow;'—had observed dissatisfaction on the part of Royalty. With the friendliest intentions, he privately counselled Etty to add, for the sake of gratifying the Queen and Prince, a little more precision of detail: and by a few days' labour, to make the whole Picture equal to the *Sylphs* at the angles, and in quality, such as would do his Art uniform justice.

As 'those exquisite gems,'—the *Sylphs*, were alluded to by Mr. Leslie:—alone 'worth, in my opinion, '100 guineas each,' examples, proving 'how much of 'the beautiful quality of your Art you may give to 'Fresco;'—truly

> 'Denizens of air;—
> Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.'

Etty always sensitive to the opinion of his Patrons, above all things solicitous of 'giving satisfaction,'—even when the "distinguished Patronage" consisted in "commanding" a laborious work, and paying a tithe of the market value; determined to do *more* than his friend had counselled. Genius is lavish with its wealth. The Frescos were becoming 'of more con-'sequence' than had at first been anticipated. And though, as was quickly discovered, 'Fresco *may* be 'altered, and with almost as much facility as oils;' alterations did not come naturally to Etty, in the unfamiliar medium.

Writing to Colonel Anson, the Prince's Secretary, under the impetus of what he had heard, he, with a dangerous frankness and modesty, declares his own original expectations verified. 'Not satisfied 'with the result of the Experiment,' for such he considers it, yet 'most anxious from the first,'—I quote from a draft of his Letter,—'to make the work 'worthy of his Royal Highness and his illustrious 'Consort's approbation, as well as more worthy of 'those of my compeers;' he declares himself 'desirous 'to be allowed' another trial: 'in the hopes of 'better success.' He, in fact, offers to make, (at his own expense), an entirely fresh attempt: to be painted in the more familiar, and to him more favourable, environment of his own Studio, and inserted in its place afterwards; a thing easily done;—the mode in which the small corners of his first Fresco *had* been executed.—'Labouring under a certain diffidence,' he explains, 'in painting in a place to which I am unac-'customed,—particularly on a scaffold,—were I to re-'peat the attempt *there*, it would probably be un-'successful.' He proposed either to 'paint the same 'subject of *Circe and the Sirens* again, or the other 'sketch of *Hesperus*.—'This, as his Royal Highness 'pleases.'

A sketch of great beauty, for the group of *Daughters Three*, he left at the Palace,—'on appro-'bation.'

Painting industriously on the *Hesperus*, and various lesser Pictures, Etty, despite his visit of the year before to Orleans, left the *Joan of Arc* in *statu quo*. The latter, elbowed by Fresco and minor efforts, had again to stand over another year, and yet another.

March 19*th*, writing to Mrs. Bulmer, he speaks of portrait: tells her he has been painting 'your 'little god-daughter. Her sweet eyes, pretty little 'face, and her being a sort of pet of yours, seduced 'me to depart from my usual denial of Portraits. I 'took some pains and trouble with her, and I hope 'succeeded.'

At the Academy, he challenged criticism with his second conception from Comus:—

> "All amidst the Gardens fair
> Of Hesperus and his Daughters Three,
> That sing about the golden tree;"

'Painted the size of the intended Fresco.'—'*Tis but a Fancy Sketch*, was his second more important work. A fancy group of partially draped, female figures,—a bouquet, as it were, of beautiful forms and hues,—it exemplifies the characteristic excellences of Etty's latter practice: sunlight glory of colour, and a free, *riant* glow of happiness, and of delight (in Nature and in his Art),—so faithful an expression of the predominant feelings of the man himself. *Because*, in fact, his sensations were thus vivid, their eloquent expression spontaneously followed his hand:—from the day *it* had once attained mastery enough to respond fully to his will. The maturer he grew, and the freer his touch,—however blurring, the *more* direct and unmistakable became this expression of the born Artist's innate fervour and enthusiasm.

May 12*th*, writing to Mr. Robert Davies of York, Etty reports, 'The Queen was at our Private View,

'Royal Academy; Prince Albert at our Dinner, yesterday week. And it will please you, and some of my York friends, to hear that he paid me a compliment, on my Picture of *Hesperus*.' Solicitous as ever in behalf of Antiquities, the Painter hopes 'they will not, as you say, destroy that gem the Round Tower at the end of Marygate. The vile system of Destruction of what can never be replaced, must, if possible, be arrested.'

June 26th, gossiping to Mr. Colls, he has again cause to mention. 'Fresco!—Oh, that word! For the future, it will be a "word of fear." I am in the midst of it, but hope this week will finish. And, *entre nous*, I think neither fear nor favour will induce me to undertake another.—But I have hopes of wax! and I have got in, (in outline), the *Circe and Sirens Three*, for that trial;—and, I hope, shall make something of it. I am about a female figure at the St. Martin's-lane; a chaste attitude: which I shall keep for you, if you like it. * *

'My Brother is still here, amusing us occasionally by "yarns" of perils by "flood and field;" tiger-combats, piratical encounters, drifting out to sea, &c., &c.: which, in one and thirty years' broiling under Oriental suns, he has seen and undergone.'—

'Really something seems wanting,' the Painter tells his absent friend, 'when you are away so long.'—'Your coffee-pot will grow rusty for want of use, and the little table too. * * I know by experience how irksome dawdling about by the sea-side,—or any side is, without some occupation.'

Notwithstanding the verbal compliment of Prince Albert at the Academy-Dinner, Etty's second Fresco (*Hesperus*) was never put up. The Sketch, when shown to Royalty, had been accorded a glance, and the request to 'take it away.' 'Poor man, he 'doesn't know what we want,' are the words reported to have been used on that occasion.—Ignorant of this August verdict, the Painter had, with his customary zeal, set to work on his Fresco; and sent it in.

His own modest confessions were made a handle against him; his voluntary exertions to secure Royal approbation, construed into the 'wish' (unconditional), to have his 'Fresco removed as a failure.' To oblige him, the Prince in person gave orders that it *should* be. And, Etty being 'unwilling,' according to the Court version, 'to execute the Fresco on the 'wall;' the Prince was 'obliged to employ somebody 'else.' These were the pretexts. Mr. Dyce, a Painter then swiftly rising into favour, who had accepted a commission to paint one of the Frescos,—ere knowing *which* one,—was ordered to execute a substitute for the condemned Fresco, (yet on the wall): Etty's *second*, the result of laborious and thoughtful months, lying, the while, in an adjoining room, ready to be put up. Mr. Dyce naturally demurring at the 'obnoxious position' in which he was to be placed; the Prince, who 'showed 'plainly, that he did not appreciate the ground' of demur; took the responsibility of *that*.'—It was 'an 'affair between him and Mr. Etty.' Almost the first hint the latter received of the intention to supersede him, was a letter (*July 8th*) from his successor, Mr. Dyce, announcing the unpleasant situation in which he

found himself; and appealing to his friend's generous construction of his almost involuntary part in the transaction. A *refusal* of the commission would, it must be confessed, have been an impossible act of heroism for a mere flesh and blood Painter; and nugatory: entailing simply, the substitution of some more willing rival; and, for a very competent practitioner in Fresco, the loss of Court patronage, all-powerful in the Parliament's 'New Palace at West-'minster,' (where the People are paymasters),—the height whither Mr. Dyce was then climbing, and whereon has since gathered his laurels.

July 7th, Etty received, (the Diary records), a 'letter from the Palace, and £40:' the sum at which, some of his associates had in February, ('by 'request'), sent in their 'account;' uniformly, and by common agreement;—a sum they were not expected to much exceed. Once, if not more than once, Etty had refused the same, as beside the mark. But Princely munificence would take no denial.

On receipt of which £40, Etty retired from the field, a loser from August condescension, by some £300 or £400: taking into account all the time expended on these Frescos. The whole business had proved fruitful in vexations, an unprecedented disturbance of the unworldly Painter's peace; of life ordinarily so tranquil and happy. From the first, not liking to go to School again, he had been averse to making the experiment. The ill success which was its sequel, and the slight put upon him at last,—and so cavalierly,—were mortifications he was calculated to feel keenly enough: what with the

natural modesty of his temperament, his sensitiveness to Fame, his habitual 'respect for Royalty' and for all 'powers that be.'.

Concerning the fate of his Frescos, Etty was seldom known but to maintain silence. His dislike to Fresco itself, as a method of painting, he would more freely communicate. 'One evening,'—relates Mr. Maclise,—'a year or two later, meeting Mr. Cope and myself 'coming from the House of Lords, where we had been 'at work all day at Fresco: on our telling him of 'what we had been engaged on, he expressed to us 'his dislike of the process; said we were not to be 'envied. *Any* style of Art for him but that! With 'a grave kind of comicality, he made a repellent 'gesture with his arm, and repeated Macbeth to the 'Ghost:—

> 'Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
> The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
> Take any shape but *that*, and my firm nerves
> Shall never tremble.'

The despised Frescos fell ultimately into the hands of Mr. Colls: who, on application to Mr. Gruner, rescued them from a shed at the back of the Pimlico Palace. At the *next* change of possession, the two Frescos for which Etty had, from the Prince, received £40,—and from Mr. Colls, a *further*, like sum, — became Mr. Wethered's, on payment of £100: in whose possession they still remain.

Etty had, in the course of his career, small cause to be grateful to the 'higher circles' for patronage. Throughout, the buyers of his Pictures were nearly all of the Middle class: not fashionable collectors,

who acquire a reputation for Taste by deputing to Dealers the formation of their splendid collections; nor aristocratic Dilletants who make 'Patronage' their peculiar mission in life.

An 'Independence,' for himself and Nicce, independence and 'a Cottage in York,' had become the object of Etty's exertions: no illegitimate aim surely, after he had wrought thirty years with empty pocket. To achieve it, he worked as hard as he had ever done: in somewhat altered channels to the old; but with equal enthusiasm, equal loving enjoyment of, his Art for its own dear sake. Yearly harder, in fact, he worked, until the final retirement in 1848:—an ample competence realized; the ambitious, long-planned, *Joan of Arc* achieved. Yearly, under the stimulus of his new aim, conjoined to that of an eager demand, he applied himself more and more unremittingly, and at all seasons, to Production.

Surrounded by an eager circle of Dealers and admirers, he was rapidly attaining his desire. 'This 'makes more than 100 guineas in the week,' he sometimes has occasion to tell his Niece when absent: on finishing a *Flower Girl* or other graceful study, and counting the receipts.—'We shall soon have over £150 a year.' The 'Etty Fund,' as to which kind friends continued regular inquiries, had already (1844) swollen to £5000:—its commencement having been made little more than three years before.

Considerable as were the gross sums realized by the Pictures and studies, Etty's habits of constant work and of facile execution enabled him to produce in ever-increasing numbers; his prices remained

exceedingly moderate. Much less, he on system asked, than many painters of (confessedly) far slighter pretension to fame or merit *now* charge: on the strength of the market for Modern Art, Turner and Etty have been most instrumental in creating. Disapproving of the high price system, he thought the young men were 'going too far;' prophesied it 'would not last.' Pictures like the *Backbiter* of this year, and its companion, *Eve at the Fountain*,—two lovely small specimens, were painted for Mr. Colls, at £30 each: who has since given more than £500 for the same pair. He sold little henceforward, to private hands; not even to personal friends,—unless buyers of old standing. He preferred disposing of his works as they were painted, to a few dealers (and *quasi* dealers) in London and the Provinces; whom, as having been the first to discover *his* value, he liked to befriend. 'I have half a dozen,' he would say, 'who will take all I can paint.' To the last, for all but his most important works, he charged old friends at almost the old prices. So little mercenary was Etty throughout: whether painting in obscurity,—'for Fame and the Honour of his country;' or, in the height of his reputation, and the decline of his health, for 'Independence, and a Cottage in York.'

During these years, even his York visits became shorter: weeks,—six weeks generally,—where they had used to have been months; lodgings taking the place of a small house of his own. A house in York, (commenced in 1834), had, we have seen, been abandoned two years since. From that time until final

Retirement, he contented himself with modest lodgings,—one small sitting-room, two like bed-rooms,—in Gillygate: Gillygate, a humble street without York Walls, the green fields near. Unwilling to change them for others, he, in sundry years, even put up with one 'lodging-room,' as North-country folk call a bed-room; rather than go elsewhere. On which occasions, Miss Etty, his usual companion now, abroad as at home, has to be accommodated elsewhere, or to stay behind in Buckingham Street. So much of a favourite was the simple, inexpensive home. The sunny little parlour, he would say, was 'good for a 'Painter.' The humble prospect visible from his bedroom window it pleased him to look out upon, and once he painted: the green level field opposite, with its trees, red-tiled shed, and haycock,—a quiet simple scene. The Miss Burnetts, his landladies, had a mother affected with a paralytic stroke. Every morning, as he came down for his short morning walk countryward, before his eight o'clock breakfast, Etty would step into the kitchen and ask Mistress Burnett how she did. It 'reminded him of Home,' he said, 'and of his own mother.' He liked, too, to use at the Minster her big, old-fashioned, red morocco Prayer-book; with its clear large print, and old-fashioned 'Companion to the Prayer-book.'

Here, on the same frugal scale as in years of far inferior fame and fortune, the Painter received his many and assiduous friends: here, in cramped space, painted the Portraits he still favoured a chosen few in York with executing. Dining daily at others' tables, he had small occasion (in York) to *give* dinners. Till

noon, he would sit reading; in the afternoon indulge in one of his favourite strolls.—Minster-service he still haunted, on week-days occasionally, and twice on every Sunday: taking on that day, 'between 'Services,' the old accustomed walk to Huntington Mill, two miles out of York, and a snatch of Sunday dinner there, at Brother John's.

To Gillygate, Etty had in the Autumn of 1844 brought two or three unfinished Pictures: painting on them during the absence of his Niece; who had accompanied his Brother Charles on a short Continental trip. Her absence from England, and exposure to the risks of a sea voyage, was to the affectionate Painter, a serious distress.

'I have been painting,' he thence writes to Mr. Colls, (*September* 16*th*), 'a portrait of a youth, to 'amuse my mind till Miss Etty came;—finished it 'to-day:—and a trifling Landscape Sketch or two; 'during which, I longed for the portable Easel. I 'will thank you to order one for me, that it may 'be ready another year. * * The effort to "*paint 'like Nature,*"—for who can?—is something. And 'therefore, I am glad *you* are making what you 'call "puny efforts."'

To Mr. Wethered, he (*this same September* 16*th*), relates that he has 'been in the Hill country, last 'week, enjoying the fine air;' and that to his 'great 'relief, Miss Etty and Captain Etty have returned 'from a tour up the Rhine, as far as Neufchatel, and 'back through Paris,—and London.'

During October, 'our ancient City is very gay.' On his Brother Charles Etty's account, whom he wishes

to show 'something of the aristocracy of the City 'and County;' he is 'necessarily drawn into some 'of those gaieties:' taking tickets for 'Lord De 'Grey's Ball, and the Grand Hunt Ball.'—'Not 'getting home this morning,' (*October 8th*),—he acquaints Mr. Wethered,—'till about three; from the 'Earl De Grey's Ball. But late hours and champagne 'suppers don't do so well with me as tea at home, 'and to be in bed by twelve. * *

'This day forty-six years ago, I left my father's 'mansion,—a humble but happy one,—and my 'dear mother's apron-strings and care; to be cast 'on the wide world among strangers:—at a dis-'tance from home, to strike out for myself and 'earn my bread; according to the primeval decree. 'Seven years of Bondage brought me near to 'that period when happiness dawned upon my 'life:—the morn, when my heart's desire was 'about to be accomplished, by enlisting as a sol-'dier in the ranks of my beloved Art, and 'fighting under *its* banner. Here I am a 'veteran in the cause, in that city whence I 'departed, sorrowing to leave my home: hap-'pily, *then* unconscious of the rough billows 'which lay between me and that haven of peace, 'God has been pleased to lend a guiding star 'to lead me to.'

The October of 1844 was *also* made memorable to Etty, and more pleasurably than that of 1808: by a Meeting,—not a farewell,—enacted in York; a meeting and dinner together of the five Brothers, from Java, Hull, York, London. Such

gatherings are always difficult to compass, where, as in most families, the members are widely scattered, and of still more various callings. This was the first for thirty years; the first since they had all gone out 'to seek their fortunes.' And it was the last. Five years later, Death had overtaken two of the party, and made another like impossible.

The same month witnessed an incident still more notable in the Painter's uneventful course: an unforeseen honour,—the first of its kind,—paid him during a short and sudden visit to Edinburgh. It had been a cherished wish, that of seeing once more his 'five Great Pictures;' after long absence; and in their new abode. Some years previously removed from the 'Octagon room' of the Scottish Academy's old quarters, to a more commodious but crowded room in the Edinburgh 'Royal Institution;' there, they had been often publicly exhibited, attracting the admiration of many a wandering artist. To show his brother from Java these triumphs of his skill as a Painter, samples of his power and success, evidence of years not wholly wasted, was a strong additional inducement to the journey.

This flying visit was made, like his only previous, during the dull season at Edinburgh. But fourteen years had rendered Scottish friends still more enthusiastic towards the Painter of the *Judith* and the *Combat*. A demonstration was improvised by the Academy, on the spur of the moment, for Etty's second (and last) day in Edinburgh; taking the

orthodox British form of a Dinner, (*Oct. 17th*): dinner 'at Barry's Hotel.' Notwithstanding the shortness of the notice, some thirty members of the Academy assembled to receive him. This tribute was made doubly welcome to Etty by the presence of his newly regained Brother, a skilful practical man immersed in affairs, unversed in Art, like most practical Englishmen. Better able to appreciate the tangible results of the Painter's gifts than the gifts themselves, *he* had previously perhaps, been unconvinced of a Success he was himself disqualified from apprehending. Here, however, was evidence that the Painter had not laboured in vain during the past thirty arduous years: even as worldly favour was concerned.

At the threshold of the feast, a further, unexpected compliment awaited Etty. The folding-doors being thrown open, which separated Ante-room from Dining Hall,—a 'large and magnificent' one, brilliantly lighted,—the Painter's eyes were saluted, to his strange delight, by his *chef-d'œuvre*, the *Combat*: at the upper end of the room, and of a table sumptuous with plate. The Picture was *set* in 'rich 'and massive festoons of crimson cloth;' and effectively lit up by 'two elegant chandeliers, suspended at 'the upper corners.' — A display, which elicited unanimous applause. The first occasion, it was pronounced, on which the Picture had had a position worthy of its surpassing power.

Of course, the chief guest had to make a speech. Wherein, he alludes to his 'peaceful Triumph' as the 'recognition of a principle,—the principle which

'made him an Artist:' the 'independent exertion 'of mind, unawed by fear, uninfluenced by favour.' Further generalities follow: as to the gratifying 'suffrages of his brethren,'—an 'elevated aim in 'Art,'—'subjects worthy of Art's powers;' concluding with a panegyric on Scotland,—a country 'romantic and pleasing;'—its 'city of Palaces,' men 'talented and brave,' women 'beautiful and virtuous;' &c.—An authentic after dinner effusion, it must be owned!

The Scottish Artists' recognition of the great Painter did them as much honour, as to him it was a seasonable set-off to recent slights and mortifications at the hands of more august Personages. He returned well pleased with his 'successful trip to the 'noble city of Edinburgh:'—his Brother Charles also, who 'is not easily 'pleased.'

'I went last Saturday,'—he details to his Brother Walter, (*Oct. 19th*),—'to Hull. * * In going, 'Eastrington' (his Brother's birth-place), 'caught 'my view. I immediately thought of you; and in 'coming back, impressed on my mind the aspect 'and character of its Church; and made a slight 'Sketch of it from memory, for you.'

'I have an address,' it is mentioned in the same, '(*from York*), to deliver to the Students in the 'School of Design here;—encouragement and advice: 'in the hopes of doing good to the cause of Art in 'my native city.'

In this Address, the Painter characteristically exhorted his youthful hearers to 'Industry, patient,

'persevering, and *untiring;*' 'throwing overboard, as 'useless or worse,—mischievous,—all-vain notions of 'yourselves, fostered, perhaps, by injudicious friends: 'that you are geniuses.' He tells them, to 'study 'with accuracy and care the objects of Art in the 'School, but *also,* the varied forms and Colour 'which Nature presents:—the beauty of plumage in 'birds, the colours and shapes of shells, flowers, and 'plants, both wild and cultivated. Try to express 'these; with a pure, accurate, and 'clear Outline:— 'the *first* essential. *Without* this, the best Colouring 'is almost a nonentity. Add careful detail, and 'finish: on which, much of the beauty of Ornament 'depends.'—He at the same time offered, out of his own purse, an annual premium of two guineas: for an original Design, for Stained Glass. The like also, he announced from his Brother, Captain Etty: 'for the best Drawing or Painting, in body colours, of 'the wild flowers, weeds, and grasses of an English 'hedge-bottom; done accurately from the objects, in 'arrangement as well as detail.'

On his way to London, the Painter took Manchester: showing his Brother Charles, the *Sirens;* and thus completing a mutual review of all his large Works.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHARACTERISTICS.

Winter Campaigns—The Daily Journey—The Daily Sufferings—Proceedings in the Life-School—Students' Recollections—Mr. Maclise's Reminiscences—*Translation* of Nature—Faith in Her—Etty's Mode of Painting—His 'Medium'—Social Meetings—Accessibleness—Kindness to Students—Good Counsel.

To brilliant hours in Edinburgh, succeeded the accustomed gloom of a London November:—a month, during which 'the only sunshine I ever 'see,' the Painter tells Mr. Vint, 'is the gaslight 'shining on the Figure in the Life.'—'We must go to 'Naples to see the Sun.' Of 'fog most dense,' he writes, to Mr. Spencer, (*November 24th*). 'When I 'went out to the Royal Academy, at six o'clock, we 'could not see from one lamp-post to another:—with 'difficulty got across the road. One omnibus was 'driving up St. Martin's Church steps, and others 'running foul of each other. At last I got there, 'painted my portion; and got safe home to tea and 'my own Fireside: which I left no more that night. '* * You have had some difficulty in getting a 'Lord Mayor this year; but have at last, I hope, 'succeeded.—Honours civic go a-begging, it seems: 'Not so, our Academic honours. There, many are 'called, but few chosen. Of sixty candidates, two 'only: of whom Dyce was one,—whom you know.'

Again, to Mr. Wethered, (*November 27th*), he makes the report,—it might have been a daily one:—'I suffered much with my cough, last night, in 'coming home. * * The frosty and foggy state 'of the atmosphere, prevalent in November, irritates 'the uvula; and brings on fits of my cough,—some-'times very annoying. But *soyez tranquille, mon 'ami!* God is good as well as powerful. I intend 'to keep as quiet as I well can; and thus steal over 'the hard season.'

Accounts these, of the battle he had to fight,—which may be accepted as true of any winter during the last ten years of the Painter's abode in London. The rheumatism, cough, asthma, from which he had so long suffered, complicated with disease of the heart, and at last with rheumatic gout, were always much aggravated by Winter, and atmospheric changes; but more seriously still, by his habits of life: the frequent alternation between heated Life-Academies and the cold air of the streets. Much as Etty suffered during the trying nights of winter, in journeying to and from the Academy, he would not fail at his post: however thick the fog, or searching the wind. Rarely, even during his severest attacks, could he be persuaded to relinquish the familiar close to a long day's painting at home: of an hour at the Academy. The entreaties of friends were unavailing.—'I shall 'be miserable, if I don't go:'—was his reply. 'I 'would rather die at the Academy, than stay at 'home.'

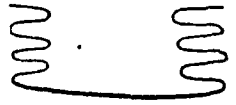
Acquaintances have seen him returning home on foot, on damp, foggy nights, constantly obliged to

stop to regain his breath. Sometimes, indeed, the exchange of an overheated atmosphere for a dense London fog, would bring on a fit of coughing, so violent, he could scarcely crawl home at all; staggering from lamp-post to lamp-post,—clinging to each. 'There goes Etty, drunk!' a Student would cry. The temperate Painter, speechless with asthma, was unable to rebut the charge.

One foggy night, during his latter years, though having promised his Niece to stay at home, he,—as not unseldom happened,—could not resist the temptation of sallying out to the Academy. She, on following in quest, is met by a friend, who tells her, he 'had passed a drunken man:'—shortly after, as she had expected, encounters a couple of men, bringing the supposed drunkard home. Sometimes, he would be sent home in a cab.—'I confess my sin,' replies Etty, (in his *Autobiography*), to his calumniators. 'I 'am fond of drinking: but only a harmless beverage, —*tea*.' To one of his doctors, suddenly called in during the night, as often before; who, having found him gasping for very breath, was plying him with hot brandy and water:—'You will have much to answer for,' he jokingly gasped out. 'You will make me a brandy-drinker in my old age.' Throughout, patient in suffering, and cheerful, his doctors describe him to have been.

'Living,' writes Mr. Maclise, 'on the top of a circular staircase, in 'Buckingham Street, and every 'evening having to ascend *another*,—to the interior 'of the dome in the Royal Academy Rooms,—Etty's 'exercise, I have often thought, was a peculiar one:

'constantly, with the interval of a walk along the 'Strand, moving in the lines'



These hundred stone steps (or nearly), leading to the Life-School, which he had to conquer daily, and second hundred to his top floor in Buckingham Street, were as trying as the night fog. At last, it took some time ere he could recover from their ascent. And the fits of coughing which would interrupt his work, painful to himself, became painful to others to see and hear. After one of these, he would rest his head in his hands for five minutes; then, arouse himself, and paint away again: until another came on.—And they were frequent. Despite which interruptions, similarly glorious Studies from the Model were achieved as of old;—equally, or still more, magical Flesh Painting.

Etty's memory is inextricably associated with the Life-Schools of the Royal and the St. Martin's Lane Academies. All old Academy Students have some reminiscences to tell of him, and of his mode of Painting there. All can remember, 'in the silence 'generally preserved in these places, listening to his 'approach, as very slowly he ascended the stairs, lite-'rally gasping for breath.' And how, 'when he had 'reached his place, he would be obliged to sit inac-'tive: before he could recover the effort of ascent, 'and commence his labours.'—'When once he did 'begin,' continues Mr. Charles Collins,—to whom I am indebted for some interesting recollections;—'the

'process was rapid enough, and sometimes, very 'peculiar. 'He would (sometimes), after having out-'lined the Figure, cover the whole with an applica-'tion of dark brown transparent colour; and then 'commence painting into this. A practice, which I 'remember, in my first enthusiasm for the Artist 'endeavouring to imitate:—not always with the hap-'piest results.'—

'His palette he brought ready set, and did not 'hold on his thumb; but screwed it to the side of his 'board. He seemed to make a conscience almost 'of using all the colours on his palette. By the time 'the evening's Painting was concluded, they were 'generally involved in one mighty sweep, covering 'the whole surface of the palette. Whatever the 'tints, they were generally made to come in in the 'background, or in the Figure, as they were avail-'able.'

By Mr. Maclise I have been kindly furnished with a very full and graphic account of the 'proceedings 'of Etty in the Life-School' of the Academy: reminiscences which, with others already incorporated, present that distinguished Painter in the graceful light of one of the great Colourist's warmest, most generous admirers. Contributed, 'as so many 'texts, hints,'—which if, adds the writer, 'in the 'slightest way suggestive of any remarks in honour 'of my friend, or illustrative of him as man or Artist, 'it will give me great pleasure:—they are here printed *in extenso*. I have not thought it right to meddle with so authentic a Portrait.

'The course of his life for years, had, as it appeared to me,'—Mr. Maclise commences,—'so little incident,

'that beyond what I observed of him in the Life-
'School, of the Academy, I could inform you of no-
'thing. And even there, it was the same routine
'course of study.' Of the part Etty played in that arena whereof he long formed the most characteristic feature, 'the Students, and Members would recognise 'such traits, as: his punctual arrival at six o'clock, 'with his millboard under his arm, and a little flat 'wooden case, of about a foot long, six inches wide, and 'two in depth, containing his palette—already *set*,—a 'few brushes, a bit or two of chalk, white and black, 'and a little brass receptacle for his vehicle,—some-
'thing like an ink bottle,—with a screw lid.' He would 'wait till all the Students took their choice of a view 'of the Figure; and then, would take the best vacant 'seat: generally, on the extreme right or left of the 'lower circle of seats that surround the Model;—all 'the others being generally occupied. In a calm 'way, even to slowness,—compared to the eager rush 'to work of the Students,—he would place his brown 'paper millboard on a drawing board, and begin 'slowly, but with great power, to delineate from the 'Model,—in charcoal. He would spend generally 'the first evening and even the second, in making 'an Outline. This I always suspected, was an ex-
'ample to the Students: who too often commence 'their Studies in Colour before they have made a good 'Outline. Then, perhaps, he would, with the com-
'mon pen and ink in the room, (for the Students 'to sign their names in the book of attendance), go 'over the charcoal Outline. He then would rub over 'his tablet some of his vehicle, and a little asphaltum,

'—touch in the masses of shadow, transparently, 'and begin to paint in the lights; *dragging* the 'edges of the lights with a free hand into the 'shadow. Next night, he would repeat the process 'to still further progress: and so on to completion.'

'It was always curious to see that whatever view 'of the Figure he was compelled, as it were, to take, 'always appeared to be the best view, from his ad- 'mirable treatment.

'The vehicle he used was old raw linseed oil, a 'little sugar of lead, and a few drops of spirits of 'turpentine.

'A long slip of wood, to serve for palette, without any 'hole for the thumb, he used to screw to the left-hand 'side of his board, with a little brass screw that his 'box also contained.—The whole of his apparatus he 'invented for the restricted room in the School.

'Sometimes, his colours would fall short on his 'palette. He had no bladders of colour or tubes, to 'replenish it. For this would increase the bulk of his 'box.—And in this case, I have seen him borrow 'from the well-supplied palette of some neighbouring 'Student: who always seemed to think it a com- 'pliment to be allowed to contribute, even in that way, 'to his Study.

'I have seen him paint,—a year or two before his 'death, apparently inspired by the fine form (more 'than usual), of a female figure,—a Study, the size 'of life, on two large pieces; which, when united, 'made excellent proportion. This was in consequence 'of the restricted space of the seats.

'It was delightful to see how beautifully he gene-

'ralized and idealized the forms of his Studies. There 'was the flavour of Nature in them. But the contours 'were for ever varied by his own admirable percep- 'tion of the beautiful. If there was poverty in the 'line, or flaccidity in the form,—his pencil seemed to 'refuse to portray it. And, taking into consideration 'that both were studying from the same original, it 'was very curious to see his glowing Study sometimes, 'contrasted with the wretched, meagre truth of the 'person who happened to sit next him; and who 'drew with dull literality.

'Sometimes, I thought his failing sight (he would 'not wear glasses,—fearful of still further impairing his 'vision), seemed, as it were, to increase his mental 'perception of the beautiful: as it prevented him 'from seeing some individual detail,—some pecu- 'culiarity of form, some minutiæ of toe or finger, 'some wrinkle, or the individual shapes of the 'features of the face. All these were generalized, 'and poetically, as it were, made mysterious, by his 'blurring brush. Scarcely ever, by form or face, 'could you trace from which individual Model he 'made his copy.

'It was the same with his Colour. All local pecu- 'liarities of hue, all discoloration,—he never gave. 'Sometimes, the Nude is as faulty in Colour, as in 'Form. But you never could trace such deformity 'in his Study. Greenish hues were turned into 'pearly tones. And bad yellows were inclined to rich 'ones; and cold purple hues translated into car- 'nations.'

It is, perhaps, well to add, lest some countenance

seem (unintentionally) lent, by some of Mr. Maclise's genial words, to the notion so fatal to excellence in Art, so treacherous a guide to young Artists,—that they are not to paint Nature as it is, but as it '*ought* 'to be;'—to add the declaration Etty himself used to make with apparent sincerity: that he 'was not a 'great Artist,—*only copied what he saw.*' No man, in fact, ever painted with more habitual, almost hourly reference to Nature. He painted 'what he saw:'—saw not with 'dim, common' eyes, but with inspired ones; with the idealizing insight of the Poet, the generalizing eye of the great Colourist. Etty's Studies from the Model, or from Still Life, are faithful portraits; but not servile imitations. The glory of those objects is given,—the sentiment; and the poetic feeling of *his* mind involuntarily betrayed. Absorbed in admiration of Nature's shifting combinations of line and hue, the Painter's enthusiasm imparts a lyric glow, as it were, to the Piece. The Model may have been—no superfine heroine; may have been jaded with long standing. But a tinge of Etty's own *riant* Fancy and happy mind:—a flush of colour perhaps, in the upturned, glancing face; or one of his noble, purple backgrounds of sky, or sea; has sufficed to confer a sentiment on the Study, and transmute it into a *Picture.* His fidelity, on the other hand, to the combinations of line and hue he actually saw, is evidenced by those unusual effects in his Studies, which to many seemed unnatural; but wherein he has been since borne out by the Calotype:—great length of limb say, (in proportion to breadth), from shoulder to waist,—a natural result, often, of the

Model's attitude and of the Painter's point of view. He adhered to the aspects of beauty Nature actually presented to him: not falsifying what he saw by 'improving' it into accordance with a narrow, traditional standard. For he had *faith* in Nature:—in Nature, as she showed herself to him. Hence, his greatness. Hence, *his* new harvest from the boundless field. All his Academy Studies have, in the prevailing grace of curve, and harmonies of contrasted hue,—as of a piece of counterpoint, whereof not a link is to be lost, —that deep claim, as interpretations by Art of Nature: such as, in a different domain, Hunt the Water-Colourist's mysteriously beautiful translations of common things have.

For two hundred years, beside Rubens, there has been but one man who could paint flesh:—and that one, Etty. Considering this: that, consequently, most of the painting we see, is in a very radical point false, and that a Painter is a *Painter*,—as contradistinguished from a draftsman,—only in so far as he *is* a Colourist; some glimpses of Etty's mode of working cannot be without interest. It were vain, however, for a man to hope to paint like Etty, by following any *system*. Art is no system, in the great Artist.

From the beginning, he had made Light and Colour a special study; had tried and examined every colour, under every light,—under all raised lights, &c. But he had none, he would say, which others did not use. It was his mode of applying them which gave him his superiority. People were always wanting him to try new discoveries in Colour, or vehicle. The stress laid on the tool, instead of the right use

of it, is the characteristic of the feeble and incompetent.

Like all great Colourists, in fact, he used few colours, and simple. The complexity did not lie *there*. It is the bungler in the Art who needs a different tint, for every different effect. 'In Etty's hands,' declares a Painter, from whom I have before quoted: with 'three colours, 'and *white*,—anything approaching to a yellow, a red, 'and a blue;—he could produce a sweetly coloured 'Picture.' Much of his magical truth and harmony was the result of mixture and contrast: green to look blue by contrast; and so on. Yellow and white hues, blended and contrasted, as he knew how to blend and contrast, produced the pearly tones of the flesh. Those beautiful effects of rosy cheek and lips were the product of simple red and white,—*not* carmine. At an Exhibition, he would observe, 'Ah! they are all using one colour:' and all wrong. The result, a brick-dust hue in the flesh tints. *His* flesh tints were sun-light.

Young painters were continually teasing Etty about his 'Medium:'—that all-important point with a certain class of Students. 'Tell them,' Etty would say, a good deal bothered by the subject: 'tell them, the only medium I use is Brains.' They could not believe but that he had 'a Secret;' that some trick or artifice went to the production of his wondrous flesh tints; something beside the skilful combination of 'a few simple, primary colours:' judgement developed by years of practice, aiding the native gift of eye and hand.

'With regard to the vehicle he used, obligingly

writes Mr. Richard Colls,—who, a great favourite with Etty, often painted with him in latter years,—'on which subject so many are curiously interested: 'his mode was most simple. 'He had no secrets, or 'peculiarities. Like Sir Joshua, he had tried all 'things, including wax, and, last of all, the abhorred 'lime for Fresco. But, after forty years' experience, 'he told me, he invariably made his medium of one 'part saturated sugar-of-lead water, one part mastic 'varnish, and one of linseed oil; occasionally, a few 'drops of turpentine added. This was his general ve-'hicle. He commenced his pictures very frequently, 'with water colour; using pure white for his high 'lights.—His draperies were usually prepared in 'this manner; also, his armour, which he painted so 'admirably. It was his substratum, or foundation; 'over which he glazed. This, he conceived, gave his 'works brilliancy:—unlike some of the Old Masters; 'where the ground was red; the colours sinking 'lower and lower. Whereas, the *white* underneath 'always maintained the vigour and freshness of *his* 'tints.

Etty used a full brush. His canvases were prepared always,—by Brown of Holborn, of whom he had his colours,—in a somewhat peculiar manner: with a rough absorbent ground, tempera or fresco-like; good for Colour. He had marvellous power over his materials. And those admitted to his Studio in latter years, wondered not a little at his free mode of dealing with them. Himself quiet and engrossed in his work, 'Talk away,' he would exclaim to such privileged friends, while glancing at his 'sub-

ject;' walking a long way back to look at his effects, or giving a dab—'in the nearest place for effect,' from his palette: the colour on which, reports one observer, he always stared hard at, before fixing with a palette knife. Sometimes, he would take off the glaze 'with his thumb,' or 'dab it with a pocket hand-'kerchief,—always in the right direction:' painting, in fact, with nails, handkerchief, palette knife, as neither Model nor connoisseur ever saw man paint before. The extremities, as for instance, the feet of Joan of Arc, he carefully pencilled out, and painted, with his brush.

After study at the Academy, concluding at eight, Etty held his social meetings. 'We had 'tea,'—relates Mr. Maclise, one of those whose frequent wont it was, to go home with him at that hour,—'tea, in the making of which he prided him-'self; capital muffins and buttered toast. A few old 'friends were generally assembled. We closed the 'evening early, with perhaps a *petite verre* of Ma-'raschino.'

Tuesday was the open day at Etty's: none being invited, many coming. In earlier years,—when Stothard was alive, Breakfast had been the hour of meeting: relinquished, as one much exciting Etty too early in the day. More than one generation of Artists he had seen assemble in his rooms. To Fuseli, Flaxman, Stothard, Constable, Hilton, succeeded Maclise, Dyce, Herbert, and their compeers: Turner supplying a connecting link between the two eras. Presiding as host with scrupulous attention, he spoke but little himself; watching the

conversation as it passed from friend to friend. When alone with a chosen intimate, and then only, Etty would converse, and warmly enough: on subjects which interested him. In 'general society,' he to the last, remained too shy and diffident to take a part:—would often, at a dinner party, sit without saying a word.

The Dealers can speak to Etty's readiness to oblige them in repairing Pictures from his hand, when injured: in payment of such troublesome labours asking the most trifling sums. In his accessibility the reverse of Turner, he would give an interview to any one, however humble; never refusing to settle a doubt as to the authenticity of a Picture bearing his name. His good nature was severely tested by the things which passed for 'Ettys,' and the gratuitous assumption on the part of their fortunate owners that they conferred a right to intrude on his Studio and his time. Infatuated connoisseur or dealer was frequently bringing some miserable daub, gravely to ask: 'Was it a genuine Etty?'—The Painter would quietly look at it, and respond: 'I have sins enough to answer for; but this is none of mine.'

Some there were to prove themselves not undeserving of his kindness. I find, for instance, one 'G. D.,' who designates himself 'Waiter at the Hotel, 'Stamford,' in a modest, well-written letter, (*Jan. 11th*, 1846), expressing gratitude for the Painter's kindness, in having authenticated, some years before, a genuine Etty (an Academy-Study), in G. D.'s possession: the letter accompanying a present of game. An 'admirer of the Art' he acknowledges himself, though in 'a humble position,'—an admirer

especially, of Ettty's Works: of whom he asks, that if again passing through Stamford, he will allow his correspondent to show him his 'little collection.'

Etty's kindness of disposition,—so well known to all his friends,—was in no respect more evident than in his accessibleness to Students. The merest tyro often asked, and received, his advice. Various letters of gratitude from Students, some from Ladies,—among whom I may instance one known to the Public, Miss M'Ian,—speak to counsel and aid freely bestowed, and highly prized. Many others there were, known or still unknown, in whose progress he took a friendly interest; arming them with introductions, lending his Studies, &c. More than one established Artist yet remembers his first interview with Etty, as an unfriended novice, applying for information and aid towards admission as Student into the Academy:—how the great Painter, after giving a little preliminary advice, rubbed up some Indian ink, (his custom), filled his pen with a camel's hair brush, and wrote an introduction to a friend likely to forward the business.

'Don't praise a young man too much,' Etty would say: 'it ruins him.' But he was always open to rising merit. To his generous recognition and encouragement of it, especially if appearing in the beloved Historical line, there was no *arrière pensée*:—as, among others, Mr. Maclise, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Dyce, each can testify. 'He always,'—avows the first-named of these Artists,—'from my first entering the School 'of the Academy, took kind notice of my poor 'efforts; and shortly before the distribution of the 'Medals, relieved my anxiety as a competitor, by

'whispering to me that I should receive the *Gold* '*Medal.*'

He was very popular among the Students, and for no reason more, perhaps, than because he did not stand aloof from them. 'I remember,' mentions Mr. Charles Collins, 'his asking all of us, Students of 'the Life-School in St. Martin's Lane, to tea and 'supper. The impression of his rooms, looking out 'over the river, was delightful. We enjoyed our-'selves exceedingly: examining his Sketches and 'Studies;—and made very welcome. This was very 'good natured of him. Students feel very strongly 'such attentions from those who have advanced to 'high honours in Art.'

Etty was not afraid of a compromise of his dignity, by committing himself to such kindnesses towards Students: any more than by 'studying' with them on equal terms. He did not nurse his dignity, nor cling to a supercilious reserve, as the right mode of maintaining it. Yet was he by no means indifferent, as we have seen, to his position;—was a staunch stickler for the due upholding of the various gradations of rank in life: for humble relations remaining humble relations, if they could not raise *themselves* by their own industry, self-denial, or ability; and for Students approaching 'the *sanctum sanctorum* of genius,' by 'decent and regular steps,'—as in his own young days. Kind and accessible as he was, he came to have a perfect horror of such too numerous Students, as, 'without letter, sometimes even without manners,' were continually invading his peace;—and got out of their way whenever he could.

His advice to Students, and to those in whose career he took an interest, was always of a kind,—in keeping with his own practice:—to stimulate constancy and fidelity of aim. Its general character is well illustrated, by such samples as that from an Address at the York School of Design, which concludes the preceding Chapter; and again, by the following fragment of a note, penned in a previous year, to his some-time Pupil.—'My dear James, in all human pur-'suits, disgusts, inconveniences, and difficulty will 'unavoidably arise. But *if* you mean to be of any con-'sideration in the world, they must be met with firm-'ness, looked in the face, and resolutely opposed. If 'you do this, they will flee from before you. *Then* 'is the time:—watch the opportunity. Avail your-'self of it. Let your word be "Forward!"—and 'victory is assuredly yours!'

Equally sound were his counsels to the same Pupil, as to the practice of his Art:—'that it is first neces-'sary to aim at a careful and truthful representation 'of Nature, in her most beautiful forms;' that, 'the 'reins can safely be given to imagination, only when 'the hand and eye have been educated, and the 'judgement matured.'

CHAPTER XXV.

BUSY FOR AN INDEPENDENCE. 1845-6. (ÆT. 58-9.)

Solitude—Alarms—Unsparing Labours—The *Listening Indian*—Letters to his Niece—Studies from Nature—Ettys at a Premium—Pursuit of Models under Difficulties—A Footing in York—Approaching Retirement—The Year's Pictures—On the Hanging Committee—A Memorable Exhibition—Declining Finish—Pugin's 'Castle'—Domestic Anxiety—Turner—Happy Anticipations.

DURING the early months of 1845, Etty had to endure privations which aggravated the ordinary trials of winter: the absence of his Niece and indispensable companion, then in Yorkshire, with his Brother Charles. The social Painter found solitude difficult to bear. Impatient for letters, a disappointment was resented with customary vehemence. A week's silence reduces him 'almost to despair.' He 'fancies 'her ill,' or, if already ill, 'dead.'

'I dreamt,'—he recounts, (*January 6th*),—'last 'night, or rather this morning, that I saw thy Grand-'mother,—*my* Mother,—who smiled upon me her 'sweet smile; surrounded by several of her sons, as 'well as me. She smiled and said:—"You see in 'what happy harmony we live!" I hailed it as a 'good omen. And a bright sunny morning, put

'me in better spirits than I was before: until eleven 'o'clock, when the postman not arriving, my intense 'anxiety for thy health and safe arrival got more 'than this heart of mine could bear.—And I almost 'panted for breath.' * *

To Mr. Wethered, he writes, (*January* 9th), of illness and death among brother Academicians. 'Collins, I am glad to hear, is better. We entered 'the Royal Academy the same week, as Students. 'Poor Smirke died last Sunday night,—a talented 'man in his time, as Historical Painter:—father of 'Sir Robert, the Architect. Three vacancies, and 'probably soon another! It is striking to be a 'member of so small a circle:—of whom, two or three 'generally die in a year!—This tastes not of "love or 'joy." I do not pledge myself to that, or any other 'subject, or any time. But I indulge in Hope:— '"And Hope exulting smiled, and waved her golden 'hair."' * *

The sudden bursting forth of a Fire in Etty's neighbourhood,—one, in which warehouses of combustible materials were numerous,—was no infrequent incident to vary the monotony of his quiet life. Two alarms occur in Miss Etty's absence: 'the first, in 'the daytime, and trifling,' he reports, (*To his Niece, January* 23*d*).—'Ann had been out. She saw volumes 'of smoke rushing out of Stafford's area, and Stafford 'himself coming out of his door, crying, "Good 'God! we are all on fire!" She despatched a boy for 'the engines.—And soon one came, accompanied by 'a lot of idle boys and men, with great hurras. 'Happily, it proved more alarming than serious:

'soot from the chimney ignited. The assistance of 'sweeps put it out.

'The second was more serious. In the dead of 'night, or rather at half-past three this morning, I 'heard a ring at the bell. * * Ann went down; soon 'returning in the greatest alarm;—"Fire, fire!" I 'drew up my bed-room blind. Sure enough, there '*was* a fire, *apparently* coming out of the Leeds 'Warehouse! With my grey coat on, and neither 'shoe nor stocking, I ran up the planks,' (to the roof top); 'and was relieved, by seeing it was the 'Straw at the bottom of Villiers Street: a mass of 'fire running all over it. *This* was sufficiently 'alarming. For, if the warehouse or trees had caught, 'or the flag-staff, we should have been in the great- 'est jeopardy. I put on my things, and sallied out, 'leaving directions with Ann, to stand by the '"thatched cottage," and prevent any sparks settling 'on it: which injunction she strictly obeyed till 'almost starved, and trembling with cold and fear.

'I endeavoured to get more engines into play:—the 'fire raging, so as to threaten the house adjoining.— 'Fortunately, the tide was rising. And we got a 'second engine, at which I worked lustily for a con- 'siderable time. It sent a deluge, Walter says; 'which in time reduced the Fire to reason. By half- 'past five, the fierceness was subdued, and our fear 'allayed.—They took down the names of those that 'worked the engines,' the Painter's 'among the rest; 'and distributed money to each. Mine I divided 'among some poor fellow-labourers near me. I had 'previously sent for four pots of porter. For they

worked cheerfully.' Disbursing "all the sixpences 'and halfpence in my pocket, I returned home; 'went to bed for an hour or two. And, bless God! 'our sweet, and (when thou art there), happy Home 'is safe, and smiling in the sun.'

A characteristic instance the above affords, of Etty's incurable tendency, never to spare himself exertion or exposure, despite failing breath, and trying cough. —'Breath and cough yesterday so bad,' he confesses, (*February 2nd*), 'that Mr. and Mrs. Walter Etty,' (then staying with him), 'and Mr. Colls, all advised 'me not to go to the Academy. But no! I will 'complete my duty,' (as *Visitor*), 'if I die at my post. 'It was the last night of the (first) tedious month of 'thy absence. I completed it gloriously: when I got 'into the warm air of the Life-Academy, was right 'enough. Mendoo and I brought all the works,' (Academy Figures), 'and traps—shield, bow and arrows, sword, '&c.,—safe home before nine: 'Charley's Figure finished. Mr. Jones and others 'were delighted with it. It is a very novel effect of 'Light and Shade. That done, my cough and bad 'breathing returned, and I suffered severely till ten: 'when, my bed-room getting warm,' and 'a strong 'dose of Dr. Bright's Mixture,' give ease.

'Charley's Figure,' the *Indian Alarmed*, was painted for his Brother, from the Indian Model, Mendoo, a favourite with Etty;—who sat to him for the *Pluto and Proserpine*, and many another work. The paraphernalia of 'shield, bow and arrows,' and the rest, Etty had taken to the Academy; accessories, by help of which a Model was, from a mere

'Academy Figure,' converted into a Picture: as we have seen to be Etty's not infrequent custom, when his turn came to be 'Visitor' in the 'Life.' And to the last, he would now and then excite 'something 'of a sensation,' among the Students, by setting a group of Two:—still, as of old, 'a thing very unusual.'

Of this same fine Figure of the *Indian Alarmed and Listening*, he speaks, (*February 5th*), to Mr. Charles Etty himself, in explanation: 'He has his bow and arrows 'ready, listening to a coming enemy,' or 'perhaps, "My Uncle," as you call the Tiger.—These 'things, my dear Charles, will, if all go well, be last-'ing mementos of you and me. When the hand 'that painted them, and the heart that welcomed you, 'after thirty-one years' absence, are mouldering into 'dust, in York Minster; your children will look at 'them, and think of their Uncle William.'

'Industrious, though anxious, 'he is getting toge-'ther,' he tells Miss Etty, 'somewhat to keep us 'comfortable, and, I hope, happy.'

By the 1st of February, he had 'had the plea-'sure of completing the large Copy of the *Combat:*'—a Copy originally painted by an Edinburgh artist, for Doo's Engraving. Etty, 'having gone nearly 'all over it' himself, had 'made it,' in fact 'one of 'his own.'

The Engravings from Etty's Pictures still remained few and mediocre. This fine work of Doo's,—even yet the only Line Engraving executed from any of Etty's more important works,—is also, the only one which fairly represents the Painter. The enterprise was too spirited an one, an enduringly valuable, instead

of an ephemerally popular work, to be produced at the sole risk,—on the hand-to-mouth system,—of any (horse or dog) Print-seller. It was promoted by Mr. Bicknell, a liberal patron of Art. After a delay of some years, the Engraving was issued by Hogarth; the Society of Arts distributing a certain number to Subscribers to the Exhibition of Etty's Works.

February 19th, Miss Etty's return being at hand, and the Painter's memory tenacious of harmless little superstitions, he announces, that 'yesterday 'morning being fine, he saw the same good omen as 'before, lately.—Two birds on the parapet, a third 'soon came;—and once more, three crows sail away: 'first, two together; then one, some distance behind.' An omen, wherewith 'Charley's arrangement of 'sending thee safely packed to Town,' well harmonizes.—

'I finished my Visitorship last night. Six long 'weeks frost, and cold, and fog. Yet all is over, 'bless the Lord! and never one minute *behind* my 'time, but often long before it. Now, I am clear for 'the year. * *

'I fancy I see Charles on his legs at the '*Supper!* It 'puts me in mind of his Brother 'Billy, who nursed him; and' who, 'at the time he' (said Billy) 'was at Pocklington School, was always 'thinking of his little Charley:' whom he had left at home.'

March 2nd, he thanks her—for her 'sweet little 'coronal of snowdrops:' 'now before me in my bed-'room,—pure as the light of Heaven which on them 'shines.' He, 'yesterday, in a little Picture finished

'for Mr. Colls,' put in 'some of these on a Female 'Head, with jet-black hair. The pure white and 'green,—green and a golden mixed,—made a pretty 'fantastic wreath: on her lap a basket of rich fruit and 'flowers.' So that the Picture is seen only to be 'coveted. * * A sweet peace reigns around my 'little bed-room.'—'It is a peaceful spot, to be so 'near the middle of the Metropolis: quiet as the 'country,—without its distance.'

The seven Pictures sent to the Academy,—like the four which had preceded it at the Institution,—all sold readily. All, with the exception of *Aurora and Zephyr*, and the repetition of a classic theme —a favourite from of old,—*Cupid interceding for Psyche;* all belong intrinsically, to the class, 'Studies from Nature:'—Nature, as seen in Life-Academies and Studios, by eyes such as Etty's. A class now a predominant one with him, one proving so marketable: to it,—invited by ever fresh delight in the study, ever freer powers of hand,—he, of his own accord, leant more and more exclusively. Five such we have: the *Flower Girl*,—alluded to in his letter to Miss Etty;—*Or like a Nymph with bright and flowing Hair;—A Votive Offering;*—the before-mentioned *Indian Alarmed;—Study of the Head of a Little Boy.*

Within the past year, two of Etty's friends and patrons had died,—Mr. Knott and Mr. Wright: the latter a friend, dating from far less prosperous days. The sale of Mr. Knott's fine collection from Contemporary Painters, was one memorable, at the time, for the high prices the modern English School com-

manded. The five Ettys,—all obtained from the Painter at first hand,—sold at great premiums: the *Diana and Endymion* for 210 guineas,—secured six years before, at £130;—the *Andromeda*, for 210 guineas also, bought five years before, at £120;—the *Bather at the Doubtful Breeze Alarmed*, (to a Dealer), for 225 guineas:—for which, only two years previously, seventy had been given. At Mr. Wright's sale, in June, the *Bivouac of Cupid and his Company*, changed hands at 370 guineas; *To Arms Ye Brave*, at 390.

In July, the Painter paid the South-eastern Coast a visit:—Brighton, Hastings, Dover, Ramsgate, Canterbury. Stopping also, at Winchester, St. Cross, and Netley Abbey; he accompanied his Brother Charles to Southampton. To whom, embarking for Java, he, on the 20th, bade a last adieu.

In September, was resumed the old familiar mode of reaching Hull and York:—in preference to Railway, an outside place on a Stage-coach; with all its concomitants of night fog, furious driving, and refractory horses. And he rejoices in the old familiar experiences: the gradual exchange of the 'gas-lights of London' for the 'dark landscapes under the veil of night.' The coach, which still, (1845), makes such experiences possible in that journey, is the 'Louth Mail.' 'It, 'and the Lynn and Cambridge, are the only two Mails 'yet' in the field:—of the goodly phalanx, which,—'with scarlet coats and studs of great beauty,—left 'Lombard Street in proud array, in former times.'

For the Head of his still unaccomplished *Joan of*

Arc, Etty had, during the Autumn, dashed off a vigorous and brilliant Study, to which he refers, writing (*Nov. 23rd*) to Mr. Wethered: first remembering an anniversary he seldom forgot to note.

* * 'More last words! This morning I had for-'gotten three things I wished to say.'—'One was, 'to tell you, to-day is the anniversary of my coming to 'London, Forty years ago: which I consider the dawn 'of my professional life. Another was to beg a favour: 'that you would be kind enough *not* to part with the 'head of Jeanne d'Arc just sent.' The request is made, from 'motives of delicacy to the young lady who so 'kindly sat for it; and also, because I do not wish it 'much seen, ere the Pictures appear. The first 'reason is most weighty. I was taken by surprise; 'or I might have hesitated about parting with them. 'If you do that, the end will be equally gained.'

The lady who had 'so kindly sat,' had been first seen in Westminster Abbey,—had there struck his fancy as suitable for the head of his chosen heroine. He set his Niece on the stranger's track: who traced her to Kensington. By dint of management,—applications to Verger, and Kensington tradesmen, the skilful envoy extracted from them, first, the calling, then the name, of the lady's father; finally, for the 'celebrated Artist,' obtained, (a delicate business), his and the lady's consent to her sitting. A characteristic instance, among many like, of the channels through which Etty often obtained his Models for the Head;—at the cost of no small pains and embarrassment. The feminine tact of his 'Right Hand' always proved invaluable in perfecting the discovery, and opening a

negotiation. Sometimes, at the Theatre, the Painter's eye would be taken with a picturesque face in the boxes; and he, issue the injunction to his Niece to 'keep her eyes about her.' On one of these occasions, a difference of opinion arose during their exit from the theatre, as to which cab the Beauty had entered. Etty followed the one he was positive contained the admired Face,—followed, running breathless through the mud, to Great Russell-Street: where his zeal was rewarded, by a lady stepping out, elderly, and—*not* beautiful.

Of the lady Etty first saw in Westminster Abbey, he painted more than one vigorous sketch. One, taken as the Painter had seen her, in her bonnet, listening to Dr. Wordsworth, his friend Mr. Spencer possesses: remarkable for spirit, colour, and force:—evidently, struck in at a heat.

A Sunday morning at home, characteristic of many, —such as he was wont to follow up, by paying his religious dues in the afternoon, at the beloved, inspiring Abbey,—is described to Mrs. Bulmer: writing *December* 1*st* of this year.—

'Reading and thinking tranquilly,—the Sun 'shining on the picture of York-Minster Choir, and 'my beautiful picture of De Witt's interior of a Dutch 'Church,—made the morning pass speedily and hap-'pily away. I sit and think of York and Italy, scenes 'that are past, and friends that God has yet blessed me 'with: and I hope long will. Imagination and me-'mory lend their wings to the spirit. Lands and seas 'are compassed, while' one is 'sitting in one's chair. 'Such delights, content and a tranquil mind can give.'

The commencement of 1846 finds Etty 'better, 'decidedly, than last winter.' Member of the New Council, Visitor in the *Painting* School for January, he goes 'to the Academy, at night and by day, without 'any very serious inconvenience.'

The wish,—one of old date,—'to live in or near dear York' had grown in strength. 'But whether,' he would write, 'the Gods will ever grant my prayer, 'or throw it to the winds, no oracle of Delphi tells 'me.' The idea it had given him so much delight t entertain, of a house within the City Walls, near the Minster and his friends,—Mr. Edward Harper, Mr. Spencer, and others, had during 1845 approached a nearer realization. By the end of that year his future retirement was definitely settled. He had bought himself a house 'in Dear Old Ebor, by the river-side; 'where,'—as he afterwards announced the fact to Mr. Spencer,—'I mean to hang my harp on the willows, and sit on 'the sunny bank to meditate: if it please 'Almighty God so far to bless me. So that when you 'walk to York, some day, you must call in, sit down and rest.'

A home to his mind had not been secured all at once. He had begun by taking a domicile his friends had found for him, in 'Gray's Court:—a sequestered and partly ancient court, near the Cathedral. At first, in high delight with the house, which, at the rear, looked out on the City Walls by Monk Bar; he had quickly discovered it to be 'small and dark,' as well as damp; and was glad to creep out of his rash bargain.

The next to offer itself, was one, he 'some twenty

'years ago,' had fallen 'in love with,' he tells his Brother 'Walter:' 'within a stone's throw of the spot where 'most of us were born, yet most open and pleasant; 'by the river-side with a small plot of ground in 'front, and pleasant prospect up the river, (at back). 'It is freehold; detached almost entirely,—which I 'like, from dread of fire.' Some years before promised the refusal of it; the chance had seemed so remote, 'I had almost given up the idea. But an opportunity did occur.' And to embrace it he had paid York a second visit, express, towards the close of 1845.—'This,' he continues, (*January 14th*), 'I signed 'an agreement to buy; and pay for, in April next. 'And if it please Almighty God, I mean to spend the 'latter years of my life in the old City, where I took 'it up.'

'You say,' 'resumes Etty later, to his Brother,—no longer his neighbour,—'you thought my house would 'be better in green fields. Green fields near a city, 'are soon laid with brick and mortar. And I am 'never happy long together, away from a River: which 'is more difficult to build on.'—'I shall be near all 'those points to which I am so attached:' the house 'in a protected' position, with 'a sunny bank, where 'we can find a snug corner for you. There are some 'stables which, if I live to get into' the house, 'I 'mean to pull down:—as I shan't set up my carriage, '(unless a wheelbarrow);—and on their site build a 'bath,—an Academic room over that. These are my 'present notions. Man proposes: a Greater than he 'disposes,—and decrees! It is happy we see not 'into the mysterious book of Fate and the Future.

'At all events, we can enjoy by anticipation. Build-'ing castles in the air is pleasing at least, if not 'very profitable. The bricks and mortar of such-'like fabrics are cheap! If the Railroad rascals,'—even Buckingham Street, had, in 1845, been threatened by wild Railway projects,—'if the Railroad rascals, 'as I call the speculators who would turn me out of 'my favourite Chambers, will let me rest till Michael-'mas, 1847, I shall have been twenty-one years in 'the upper set: twenty two and a half, if not twenty-'three and a half, in the building altogether;'—'shall 'have served three apprenticeships in them,' and 'shall' (then), 'be sixty years and a half old. I should 'like, if it please God, to spend the last ten years of 'my life in the City of my fathers,—hear the solemn 'anthem swell in the shrine of St. Peter: where 'beauty of Colour first saluted these eyes,—and 'where I knelt to Him that made them.'

Finished Studies of female form, under the title, and with the accessories of a *Bather*, were, like *Studies of Colour* from Still-Life, growing favourites wit Etty: both classes of subject much in demand amor present admirers. A fine *Bather* was exhibited the British Institution, in 1846: a Female figur stooping in the water,—giving occasion, aver critis, 'for the greatest variety of curve.' It was accom-anied by two of a similar character,—*Children Re-posing after Bathing;* and the *Pirate*,—a swarthy figure, bearing off his fair prize: a subject affording the Painter ample scope for bold contrasts of hue.

The principal Picture of the season was the second *Choice of Paris;* inferior to the *first* in every thing but

Colour,—and in its sketchy, *unset* character, significantly foretokening the drawbacks destined to alloy the power of the *Joan of Arc*.

'Your last little present of forget-me-nots,'—mentions Etty to Mrs. Bulmer,—'and violets,' (in a letter), 'sadly flattened at first, by Betsey's gentle care re-'vived. A little Infant Psyche, with Cupid by her 'side, is gathering them now, in the Exhibition.'—The *Sea Bather* a specimen of Etty, in the direction —the immediate, unsophisticated study of Nature,—in which failure never once overtook his practised hand, —was, of all his *Bathers*, one of the finest: firm in outline, deep in tone. Minor pieces, characteristic of the powers and the deficiencies peculiar to this period, were the *Juvenile Scribe*:—bold, but sketchy; excelling in Colour,—in vigour of hand, rather than in precision; and the *Still-Life* an effect of Colour exclusively,—and legitimately so.

One of his compositions, from Comus,—

"Circe, with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades;"

the subject of his *first* Fresco, was exhibited in the same year: a needful self-vindication, after the Royal snubbing, he was known to have received.

In this year, Etty was on both Council and Committee of Arrangement, at the Academy.—'I should 'indeed enjoy,' he declares, (*April* 21*st*), to Mr. Spencer, '—when they come, the Spring Zephyrs from the Ouse, 'in and around the Plantations. At present, their wings 'are icy and cold; and want the geniality that inspires 'poetry. The sunny fireside pleases better. I am 'in the midst of the bustle and difficulties of the

'approaching Exhibition: which, I am happy to say, 'promises to be a good one, and will, I think, please 'you. * * I join with you in execration of the 'hideous engineering and Railway mania,—that seems 'swallowing up all that is estimable and lovely on 'our earth. I hope some good Angel will arrest 'its progress of desolation and destruction. * * 'The kettle boils for breakfast, and duty calls me to 'the Royal Academy; where *hanging* is not out of 'fashion,—not that sort practised at Newgate, a more 'innocent, though not always inoffensive mode: far 'from it, as I expect to learn by and bye.

The 'incessant exertion' involved by his office, superadded to 'these East winds and fogs'—which 'wither 'him, as he were a plant,'—much aggravate his difficult breathing and cough; 'had last night,' he relates, (*April 26th*), to his friends, the Bulmers, 'almost worn 'me out. I with difficulty got home:'—having, in fact, been *sent* home in a cab. 'Genial skies,' genial 'atmo-'sphere and suns would make me well. Meanwhile, 'the worst, I hope, is over at the Academy. We 'have almost mastered our difficulties. And by 'this time next Sunday, I hope to feel another 'man. To-morrow week, the Public are admitted. 'And nothing,' then 'remains, but for the servants 'to receive the shillings; and the Treasurer to 'take care of them. A capital Exhibition it will be. 'Portrait has given way to Subject,—Domestic and 'Landscape; which, you know, is more interesting.' The greater *prominence* of Subject-Pictures this year, was a result partly attributable to the fact of Etty's having been on the 'Hanging Committee.' The Exhi-

bition fulfilled his prediction:—is still remembered by Exhibition-goers, for its general excellence; as one in which, then rising men, like Frith, Ward, and others, made a conspicuous figure; wherein too, Landseer's *Peace and War*, and Mulready's *Choosing the Wedding-Gown*, drew the suffrages of all.

Exclamations against 'smudginess' were, as to Etty, yearly gaining the ascendant among the talkers about Pictures,—not the lovers of them, nor the buyers. The superficial characteristic arrests the attention of superficial people; who get no further. The *Choice of Paris* of this year, and some of the small Pictures, lent a handle to the growing complaint: especially amid the glare of the Exhibition, and looked at some few inches off. Even in the *Circe*, loyal subjects found cause for a cheerful endorsement of Royal opinions. *The Sea-Bather*, however, firm in handling as bold, won the general voice: effectively giving the lie to the assumption, that masterly drawing, and clear depth of tone, had come to be beyond the veteran's reach.

After many postponements, *Joan of Arc* is actually 'the next work on hand:' of which, 'I trust,' writes he, nothing untoward 'will prevent such a completion 'as may be satisfactory to my friends, worthy of her, 'and honourable to myself. This is my prayer.'

A visit in the summer to Mr. Gillott of Birmingham, Maker of Pens and Buyer of Pictures, was followed by another, to his friend Pugin: at his Ramsgate 'Castle.' From the latter sanctuary, he apprises his Niece, (*July 11th*), how, 'installed in the 'state bed-room,—state without nonsense and with 'real comfort;'—sitting 'on a beautiful, green velvet

'chair,' at the 'oak table,' whereon he is writing; 'his window looking out on a beautiful bay, luxuriant corn-fields, and, in the distance, the coast of France;' he 'only wants one thing:'—*her* presence.

Sunday (*July 12th*). 'This was a glorious morning. 'The bell rang at six. I got up about seven. At eight, 'is Mass in the Chapel: this morning,—to accommo- 'date Stanfield, who has to come some distance,— 'half-past.' Before that hour, he hears the 'Lark at 'Heaven's gate, singing,'—truly a Matin song,— 'soaring and singing, till a mere apparent speck; 'its little wings flashing back the sunshine: singing 'over our heads the Heavenly hallelujah of Nature 'and ecstasy, for the best part of an hour. Herbert 'and I watched its untiring praises till we went into 'the Chapel. * * Oh! that dear Lark! Sure, 'something holy is in that breast, that *little* breast, 'that sang so loud and untiringly! * *

'The butterflies are dancing by dozens over the 'golden corn-fields.'—'The swallows are building 'their nest, under the eaves; indeed, have built it, 'and are feeding their young: shooting silently by. 'All Nature looks gay. * * Pugin treats me like 'a prince.' And 'I am truly enjoying myself:—as far 'as I can without thee'.

To his Brother Walter, he tells the same tale: that he is 'breathing the pure breath of Nature, from 'off corn-fields, golden with plenty; seas azure and 'green;' &c. 'You would delight to see this house,' he assures another friend.—'It is so unique and truly 'comfortable: all in the old English style. There never 'was but one Pugin: one of the most marvellous

'men of his age. Architecture, painting, drawing, 'music, singing, all come alike to him. Beside he is 'one of the best fellows in the world.'

'Next morning,' (*Monday*), he set his palette; and 'painted on the three backgrounds of the three '*Cupids:*' from Ramsgate sea and landscape. Of these Pictures, one was a *Psyche,* not a *Cupid:* one of Etty's beautiful little gems in that kind.

We have seen how indispensable to the Painter, the companionship and services of Miss Etty had long been. During his Brother Charles's stay in England, Etty was more than once agitated by apprehensions of losing her. A similar fear had once,—years previously,—brought him up post from York, in much excitement. Her illnesses, which were frequent, equally disturbed his peace. In the Autumn of this year, when, during her absence, on a visit to Mr. Gillott, such an attack seized her, the bare idea of danger kept the Painter from work a whole week: an extraordinary phenomenon with him, to whom a day was spent unnaturally, without a brush in his hand. News of her recovery sent him back to his easel with new energy: though 'his heart flutters' of a day, as post-time draws nigh.

In high spirits at the good news, he recounts, (*Sept. 3rd*), how, getting up betimes as usual,—at five or six, that is,—he has been successfully working up those things left undone before: how he has progressed with the *St. John,* and the 'Tambourine Sketch;' and has finished a portrait of a Lady-friend, on which he had for some time been occupied. He mentions also, a visit from Turner: whom, 'as I was going

'out to-day, I met coming down our street. I made 'him turn back; as he was coming to see me. 'He had heard I was going to establish a School in 'York! and wanted to know what apartments I had. 'I thought he meant in York. No! not so: *here*. 'He liked my view; and seemed a *little* disappointed 'I was not going sooner. However, he was very 'good, drank a glass of wine; and, I believe *sincerely* wished me well, wherever I went; said he should be sorry.'—That commanding Watch-tower, with its picturesque look-out, would, in fact, have been a far more suitable position for the great Landscape Painter, than the dingy house in Queen Ann Street, he had tenanted so long.

For Turner, Etty always declared his 'great 'veneration,' as for one 'who had done some of the 'finest things in the world;' sharing however, the sentiments of the orthodox as to his late works: pronounced some, at least, of them 'fiery abominations.' 'When he abandons Nature, I must abandon him:' was Etty's somewhat superfluous declaration.

The Painter had by this date, become *bonâ fide* owner of a House in York: on payment of some £1100. Proud to command such a sum, and to possess a 'house of 'his own,' he never regretted the bargain. Fond as a child of his new possession, he was more constant to his liking. The more he sees of his mansion,—'open, quiet, 'with a pleasant bit of garden, and a tranquil prospect 'over several others,'—the 'more he likes it:'—(writing from York in *September*). Cheerful and commodious, in the centre of York, yet out of the bustle, it really had many recommendations; though not so dry or

healthful, as if it had stood—on 'the Mount,' say. But a sentiment, or an old habit, overpowered all other considerations with Etty. Having lived by a River the greater part of his life, he must still live by one. The position,—beside St. Martin's Church, removed a little back from Coney Street, (York's principal thoroughfare), commanding the Ouse at the rear;—reminded him of familiar Buckingham Street. He can sit looking down the river, and admire the sunsets, as in former times from the terrace-walk of his friend Atkinson's garden, in Lendal; can gaze on his favourite, 'tall spire' of North Street Church; and even catch a glimpse of the 'distant Wolds, through 'the sacred belt of our dear Walls.' Already, he 'feels 'as much at home in an arm-chair, by a fire,' in his otherwise unfurnished house, 'as if he had been 'born there.'

A letter to Miss Etty, (*Sept.* 11*th*), describes recent doings in York, and 'a solitary walk on dear Knaves-'mire:'—'Knavesmire, the haunt of my boyish 'days, where I,' in those days, 'used to take my two 'poor Scotch cows;—the old Mill of Father's near, 'pasture all around. * * The day was lovely:—'the sun warm and golden; the atmosphere and 'scene most pleasant.'—'The swallows and swifts 'darted by in the sun, and seemed to welcome me, in 'my sweet solitary ramble. Here an old horse biting 'his mouthful of grass;—there a cow, crumping: all 'peace and pleasantness. I entered the sweet and 'solemn, natural, Gothic Cathedral of Knavesmire 'Wood. The last time I was there, was with poor 'John Harper. The sun darted in here and there,

'as it does in the Minster.—I turned my thoughts 'homewards. The crows were collecting their even-'ing council. I gathered some sweet little forget-'me-nots, and brought them home.'

This was written from 'the Vale of Givendale,' where Etty was staying with his friends, making Sketches of horses, for his *Joan of Arc*. His great desire was, to see a horse which had lain down, rolling on the ground; as he subsequently introduced one in the centre compartment of *Joan of Arc*: there, *in*voluntarily rolling over amid the throng and press of the sortie. But the difficulty was to hit the right moment. A servant would hastily announce the favourable conjuncture, and he rush out to secure it,—always arriving too late: taking, however, his disappointments very cheerfully.

For the steed on which the heroine herself is mounted in that scene, Etty, in the course of his preparations for the *Joan of Arc*, made divers visits to Astley's, Tattersall's, &c. It being one of his few attempts in that kind, the praise subsequently won from so competent a judge as Landseer, was, of itself, felt no mean reward.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LAST FRUITS. 1846-7. (ÆT. 59-60.)

The Last Epic—A Struggle—A Sincere Te Deum—Large Canvases: an Anxious Removal—Unexpected Purchasers—The Painter's Intentions—The Picture's Reception—Joan at the Stake—Leslie's Eulogy—Sorrow—Feasegate in Ruins—Spring Pleasures—The *Fleur de Lis*: its Progress—A Unique Frame—The York Home: Prospective Delights—School of Design: a Task Achieved—Last Appearances at the Life-Academy,—Setting Glories—Alarms: from Revolution—From Fire.

In October, animated by dreams of approaching retirement, Etty commenced earnest application to the belated Epic. Refusing to accept commissions for 'Little Bits,' he made his friends Wethered, Colls, and others, promise a six months' abstinence from such demands.—'Out of bed,'—records the Diary,—one day, by six in the morning, another by five, another as early as four; he had unmistakably plunged into 'full work'—'one of the best cures for the rheumatism,' protests he, as usual. Despite the remedy gloomy November with its fogs, brings the usual attacks on his 'trachea, bronchial tubes, and throat,—'with cough and asthmatic accompaniments.' The winter was a severe one throughout. And Etty yearly grew less adequate to enduring winter at all. He flagged not, however, at his work: compressing into six months, amid 'struggles for very breath,' the last desperate effort which was to translate conception into achievement. The strong will and giant energy

sustained the valetudinarian. But throughout, he suffered much:—'the 'weather, asthma, cough, in 'triple league,' against him.

'I have been,'—details he to his Brother Walter, (*Wednesday evening, Dec. 16th*),—'for some time in-'tending to write to you. Frequent attacks of my 'enemies,—cough, and shortness of breath, and en-'grossing attention to my dear *Joan of Arc*, have, till 'now, prevented me. At times, the weather's severity 'has nearly floored me. But I have again rallied; 'and, fighting side by side by my inspiring Heroine, 'have,—if I may believe what folks say,—done 'wonders. Certainly. she is an inspiring subject:— 'worthy of the Poet's pen, and Painter's pencil. If 'God will only grant me health and favourable 'weather, I hope to make my Pictures worthy 'of' *her*. As yet, however, prevails 'cold most 'intense. My medical man, Mr. Cartwright, says, 'the thermometer at two o'clock after midnight, on 'Tuesday morning, was 15° below freezing-point. 'On the evening previous, I suffered much: but, at '*that* time was snug enough in a warm room, in bed. 'Since which, I have kept at home, and not gone even 'to the Academy:' since Monday night that is. 'I 'have, fortunately for me, this season, an entire exemp-'tion from Visitorships at both the Academies; having 'done my duties in the summer sunshine. * * T. W., 'jun., of Lombard-Street, has just made a trip to 'Paris: and, as I had when I went there in winter, soon 'had enough of it and the cold. As I predicted, he 'returned home quite in good humour with his own 'country, and coal fires;' bringing 'me some colours

'I had commissioned him to get. * * I am ordered 'to talk as little as possible, as it irritates my 'cough.'

Jan. 14*th*, 1847, (writing to the same):—'My cough 'and breathing are somewhat better. But the season 'attacks me now in another shape,—that of my old 'enemy, rheumatism: and in my *hands*, too, of all 'things! I yesterday' returned the 'attack, by having 'one of Mahmet's vapour-baths; and mean to have 'another on Saturday:'—having 'felt benefit from it.' 'Am now in my bed-room, on the stay-at-home sys-'tem: the concerts I attend, the singing of my tea-'kettle. The dances, are those of the lid. York, they 'say, is very gay: parties without end! What dif-'ferent atmospheres different constitutions suit! 'Mine is at present certainly not gay: cheerful, yet 'grave. My engrossing subject is a grave and tragic 'one. My repeated attacks are anything but comic! 'I am thankful it is not worse. And my advance-'ment of the large work, under all these adverse cir-'cumstances, almost surprises myself!'

Pity,—as I have said,—the fulfilment of the cherished design had not been coeval with its conception,—six or seven years before: when Etty's health was less impaired; his hand still retaining its pristine strength, and his eye its keenness. The mere physical strength requisite to paint pictures of the size of the *Joan of Arc*, it would have taxed youth and health to supply.

The overtasked Painter confessed in the sequel, to a 'fearful Struggle:'—'with this severe winter, the 'asthma, cough,' and other 'difficulties of getting

'through my three large Pictures.' Difficulties, which,' 'almost overwhelmed me at times;' but not quite:—'made him waver.' But he pressed on. Nothing less than an unconquerable force of will *would* have brought him off victorious.

Victorious he is at last: and 'deeply grateful to' 'God,' Who has 'sustained me,' and 'given me the 'desire of my heart.' The last instalment of the 'Nine colossal Pictures' he had all along set his mind on painting, 'the Three Times Three,'—so frequent an allusion on his lips,—is achieved, after many delays:—after having cost me,' recapitulates he, (*May 5th*), to Mr. Colls,—'many an anxious thought 'for considerably upwards of seven years;'—seven 'years or more, since the canvases were stretched. '* * Long choosing, and beginning late, hesi-'tating among a variety of points in her story, '*years* passed ere I could fix my choice;' and further years in search of information: including the Pilgrimage to Orleans; with visits by the way, to Rouen, where as we have seen, he sketched 'the old houses 'there, I dare say, at the time;'—and to Paris, where he 'saw all the Pictures relating to her that 'had been done in modern times.' These visits, his applications to his friend Nockalls Cottingham, for historical data; to Mr. Planché, for correct authorities in armour; and to many others:—all evidence that, 'desirous of sparing no pains to do justice to 'her cause,' he was diligent to render the story with 'substantial, extrinsic accuracy,—as well as intrinsic;'—notwithstanding some artistic licenses taken advisedly.

Monday, May 5th, the colossal Three left Etty's Studio, 'to take their chance' in the world.—'I 'painted on the Picture,' narrates Etty to his Brother Walter, (*April 15th*), 'till Saturday night; and then 'gave Sunday for a general revision of it alone, and 'completion of the portions not yet done. By one 'o'clock, on Easter Sunday, I felt that I ought to go 'to the Abbey, and return thanks to Almighty God, 'for having so mercifully dealt with me,—as to enable 'me to complete so far this colossal effort:—and that 'nothing should prevent me. I went, and never did 'the glorious Abbey look more beautiful. The golden 'sun shone. The Service was fine. And the Dean 'preached a rather fine, philosophical sermon on, "Let 'there be light, and there was light."* * I spent 'the evening in peace.' * *

Not in the Abbey alone, did he render his fervent acknowledgments. He had often said, while the work was in progress: 'This will be the last of the Three 'times Three. And *then* shall I pour out thanksgiving 'and praise to Him who has given me eyesight, 'strength of mind, and health, to finish it.' When subsequently reminded of his promise, and asked if he had fulfilled it: 'Yes,' he answered, with much unction;—'in York Minster I returned thanks from 'my heart and soul; and afterwards took the 'Sacrament.'

The removal of his large Canvases, was, as in previous instances, an arduous and exciting business. 'Our good friend Gillott,' Etty acquaints his Brother, 'had the direction of the mechanic part of the removal: which was, in consequence, well done. The

'cylinder for the great Picture, was one foot in 'diameter. And the two uprights were merely legs 'for it to stand on, screwed on, till *it* was wanted: 'and would be capital, if sent in the country in a 'box; as there would be no pressure on the Picture. 'It was, of course, hollow: of deal, smoothly planed, 'then rubbed with sand-paper; so that the surface 'could not injure. The volume of the cylinder being 'so large, would take nearly a yard of the canvas to 'go round it. We did not put paper or anything; 'but rolled the Picture face in, contrary to general 'recommendation: as I felt assured the contrary 'would be fatal.' * *

'By half-past four, I was stirring,—Monday morn-'ing. I had arranged for Brown's men to come at five: 'which they did; Mr. Gillott, at half-past. By six, the 'Picture and cylinder were on the road to Trafalgar 'Square. And before half-past eight, the whole Three 'were not only stretched, but in their frames, at 'the top of the great room.'

It has been seen, how in previous years, Etty's own wish to paint a large Picture for York,—only asking to be repaid the actual outlay for materials and expenses,—had failed to elicit any virtual response. Later, his friend Mr. Spencer had laboured to inoculate the York magnates with something of his own enthusiasm:—obtaining half a dozen promises of subscription for the *Joan of Arc*. Others were willing to have lent their names, at the tail of a long list of influential persons,—to keep them in countenance:—everybody, in fact, waiting for everbody else to stir in so unprecedented an enterprise as recognition

of Art. People who had been too indifferent to accept a masterpiece from Etty at (allbut) a gift; who had, through sheer apathy, allowed their disinterested Painter's noblest works to be obtained for nominal sums, by Edinburgh and Manchester,—and become the pride of (to him) alien cities;—were not likely to select so unusual an investment for their money, when the Painter's prices were no longer nominal. They had, in fact, already adventured (and lost) their money in Railway bubbles.

One friend suggested the possibility of setting on foot a subscription, to place the *Joan of Arc* in the National Gallery. But 'the works,' replied Etty, 'of a living Artist would not be accepted.—'Death is the passport *there*:' a penalty he confesses himself 'not yet willing to pay, as a key.'

The Pictures were purchased by Messrs. Colls, Wethered, and Wass, jointly, for £2500,—*paid down*: it being agreed for the last-named to engrave them. A different price, to any Etty could obtain twenty years earlier, for the *Judiths*; or ten years earlier, for the *Sirens*. 'You have put the golden crown on 'my head,' he joyfully exclaims to Mr. Colls. The sum went to swell (very sensibly) the 'Etty Fund:' to which it was added, intact.

The rumour of the price the work had commanded, of itself bestowed on it some interest with many; and excited some wonderment. I remember at that Exhibition, being accosted by a gentleman 'from the 'country,' desirous of being shown Pictures which 'had sold for £2500.' He had just 'ten minutes to 'spend in the Exhibition,' and had spared those ten

solely to see 'the Modern Picture,' which had realized a sum so fabulous.

In the letter to Mr. Colls which I have already borrowed from, Etty, at the former's request, describes in black and white his intentions in these Pictures. And when, in the Autumn, the proprietors exhibited the work in the Provinces, a short summary from his hand of Joan's story as illustrated in the former, was printed for the occasion. I will interweave gleanings from the two accounts, as illustrating the *motives*, as the Germans say, on which Etty painted.

'Destined by the Almighty,' he affirms of his favourite Subject, 'to be the instrument in the accom-'plishment of one of His great designs;' she became, 'from a simple peasant girl,' a 'heroine, patriot, and 'Deliverer of her country.'—'Swayed by two powerful 'emotions, religious and political enthusiasm,' 'she 'believed herself a chosen instrument in the hands of 'the Deity; and by the strength of this faith was 'supported.' 'Her mind feeding on itself,' had received 'impressions, which the simplicity of her 'nature interpreted as direct messages from Heaven.'

'I thought that as she was the Judith of modern 'times, her story, like my First,' and 'like the Epic, 'ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end;' also, 'like all my large Pictures, point a great moral 'lesson to the mind: namely,'—'that heroic self-'devotion to her country and her Prince, which has 'stamped her fame.'

In the First Scene, he supposes the 'young enthu-'siast' having found,—'at the tomb of a knight, 'in the Church of St. Catherine de Fierbois,—the

'Sword she had dreamt of;' 'devoting herself and 'it to the service of God and her country,'—and 'invoking the inspiration from Heaven, which after-'wards sustained her.'

The Second represents her—'under the influence of 'that Inspiration,'—'riding to victory;' accomplishing 'more by *that* than by those human passions' which actuate ordinary characters: the 'vulgar expression 'of which' he has accordingly omitted. 'Her eyes 'cast down,'—'she may be supposed breathing a short 'prayer.' For 'she does nothing of herself. Her 'arm is wielded by a Power, of which herself is scarcely 'conscious.' This mode of treatment 'has given rise 'to an idea that she is not sufficiently excited. The 'effect was intentional. It would have been easy to 'knit the brows, and dilate the nostril. I conceived 'her in possession of superior power: the serene' command of which 'I endeavoured to express.'—An essentially *true* conception this; perhaps the highest;—certainly, the most difficult: but not fully realized in the Picture.

'The incident of carrying off the wounded man 'near the Gate, is the recollection of' one 'witnessed 'by the Painter' in Paris, during the Three Days of 1830. A similar had happened to Joan, 'as she 'was passing the Gate:' whereat she had exclaimed,—'"I never see the blood of a Frenchman, but my own 'boils with indignation."'

'In the Last, the tale,—a sad one,—is pretty plainly 'told. She had called for a crucifix.'—'An English 'soldier, touched with compassion, tied together two 'pieces of wood in the form, and gave it her.' It,

'she is clasping to her bosom.' Meantime, one had been 'sent for from the nearest Church: which the 'Monk is presenting to her view.'—'Father Avenel en-'dangered his own safety several times, to administer 'this consolation: till she, perceiving his danger, 'begged him to leave her to her fate! As the smoke 'and flames cleared away, she was seen clasping the 'crucifix, and calling on the name of Jesus. Tradi-'tion says, a white dove was seen flying towards 'Heaven.'

Finished pictures the *Joan of Arcs* assuredly are not. Noble as is the appearance they make by themselves, they, in that respect, suffered at the Adelphi in 1849, by comparison with the *Judiths*. The day was past with Etty for careful detail. The sure hand and patient was his no more. The very facility a Master in the Art has attained often leads him into habits of careless execution: a fact, the later stage of many a great Painter's career illustrates. Above all, time and strength had been wanting to make them *all* they might have been capable of at his hands. But the power, the vitality, the imaginative suggestion are there,—the poetic sympathy: together with noble draftmanship, and glory of Colour. In the main scene, spirit, energy abound, amid the general action; though, in the principal Figure, depth of feeling has failed to embody itself;—such as would have been developed at a happier period of Etty's powers. But in the *last* tragic scene of the drama, we have a composition, complete in every sense: the story told graphically, simply, pathetically.

Of themselves, the *Joan of Arc* lent a dignity to

the Exhibition of 1847; commanding general interest and criticism: the latter of the usual calibre, lapsing, much of it, into shrill abuse; which, during the last years of Etty's life, had become a habit with the 'guides of public opinion.'

But if he failed to secure applause, which won, would have been small honour, among lovers of Art, and brother Artists, his fate was better. More than one wealthy connoisseur is reported to have been willing to compete for the Pictures, had rooms large enough been at his disposal. Turner, Landseer, Leslie, among others, warmly praised them. The last-named spoke of the concluding scene as the most tearful and affecting Picture he had ever looked on. In his Lecture on Etty's works, three years later, the same competent judge dwells on it in a similar spirit:—

'I can call to mind,' he there asserts, 'no Picture 'I have ever seen, of a subject similar to the death of '*Joan of Arc*,—approaching to it in pathos; and so 'entirely free from the morbid taste with which such 'scenes are often treated. In looking at it, I could 'think only of the heroine and her fate, so dis-'graceful to two great nations. The mind is not 'drawn from this by any studied elegance in her 'attitude, or in the dark drapery that invests her. 'We seem to see herself, not a picture, as she stands 'appealing to Heaven, with a faith which does not yet 'conquer her terrors of a fearful death. The careful 'manner in which the quaint old houses in the back-'ground are painted, gives a dreadful reality to the 'scene; and instead of the usual common-place ac-

'companiment to such subjects, of a lurid sky, Etty 'has shown the heavens clear as the soul which is 'about to wing its way from a cruel world. And, 'like a true poet, he has availed himself of the 'reported incident of the dove rising in snowy 'brightness. Though this Picture and the others 'from the same story are inferior in completion to 'the magnificent series from the history of Judith; 'yet they place the Painter higher, to my thinking, 'as a master of sentiment: perhaps, because the 'subjects are of more interest.'

The *Graces*, which accompanied the *Joan of Arc*, at the Exhibition, has the inadequacies and the Colour of Etty's later years.

The death of an only daughter of one of his oldest York friends, known from her childhood to Etty, and whose beauty had been a favourite theme of his Art; tidings of which event reached him during his holiday month of April, soon after the joyful completion of the *Joan of Arc*; 'plunged me,'—he writes,— 'into the deepest grief. Poor tender flower! taken 'away from earth to bloom in Paradise. An event 'so sudden and unexpected, (by me), it seems almost 'a frightful dream. She was always a beautiful 'flower; but, *like* a beautiful flower, fragile and ten- 'der. * * Till that hour which shall be yours to 'meet her, the separation is awful. But that hour 'will come! These are the bitter draughts of 'life.'—'On all sides, amongst one's friends, one 'hears of little but difficulties, pecuniary and other- 'wise, illness, disease, death. Gracious God! give

'us grace to look at these visitations aright! But 'they stagger one.' * *

This year, Etty allowed himself, what he had seldom done, an early summer visit to York; arriving just in time to witness a 'new Improvement:'—as had often happened to him. He was 'startled to see 'the greater part of his native Street, and the ad-'joining, a heap of rubbish.' Bestirring himself with influential friends to stay further destruction of a locality, from old associations interesting to him, he 'begs as a boon' of the improving Commissioners, that they will 'spare what remains of Fease-'gate, and with it, the House I was born in.'—'If all the Doctors of the Sorbonne,' he protests, (*July 22nd*), to his Friend Mr. Andrews,—'were to try to 'put me out of love with York, they would fail:—if 'Commissioners will not improve it *too* much: so 'much, that I can't recognise "*Alma Mater.*"'

Many who have returned to York, after long absence, have *not* known the place again. So much in twenty-five years had it been altered:—what with new streets;—Antiquities and houses pulled down;—old houses refaced, or, if not refaced, their beautiful stucco ornament swept away, because *more difficult to repaint* than a plain surface. 1848 was a year in which 'Street improvement,'—architectural jobbing, that is,—was very rampant: civic Improvement, which consists, not in substituting, say, a radically amended drainage,—the present system still depending on a Stream, (the sluggish Ouse), almost without a current;—not in anything so useful as that; but, in

turning two streets or three into one, of imposing breadth, for the accommodation of the city's extraordinary traffic,—an occasional cart, or stray wheelbarrow. As soon as stage-coaches had ceased to run, was precisely the moment chosen by our country towns, throughout England, to widen their streets. Up to this very moment, the York people are yet busy, translating the architectural expression of their city: from a beautiful and venerable language, into a mean, sordid, and Babylonish gibberish. Despite its many triumphs, the Builder faction in York still bears a grudge against the Walls and Antiquities, as having 'stood 'in the way of the Improvement of this city;' and remembers Etty as one 'childishly fond of Antiquities. For in fact, he was guiltless of interest in what is called 'Modern Architecture.'

The past severe labours of the Spring were followed by snatches of Summer delights. A letter from York to his Niece, (*May 27th*), shows the Painter vividly impressionable as ever. A trip had been taken to Scarborough, to see his Brother Walter. Despite asthma, he had climbed the picturesque Castle mount:—heard blackbird and lark, watched the 'wild flowers wave.' He delights to speak of Nature in this, to him, unaccustomed season: its 'freshness, 'youth, and gaiety,'—of the 'gaiety of grace,' of the 'little stars of flowers.'

'I went after I left you,' he apprises his Brother Walter, 'to Beverley and Hull, for an hour or two, 'to see the folks: came back by mail to Pocklington. 'Walked over to Givendale, passed a few hours there: 'and back to York, Saturday afternoon.' At Bever-

ley, 'I visited dear Uncle' (Calverley's) 'monument 'in the Churchyard, carved by himself.—Travelling 'about, and seeing the luxuriant and youthful beauty 'of the country, has done my health a great deal of 'good.'

A less sunny visit is related, (*to his Niece*), to Leeds, and the young friend's home, whose death he had so lately mourned. He sees the 'four little motherless 'children;'—'chairs and sofas of Cicely's work, in 'embroidery; her harp in the corner; her picture 'hung up:' hears 'her little daughter's inquiries 'why Mother does not come back.' When 'they 'tell her she is gone to Heaven, she says, "Why does 'she not *write* then?"'

Of a visit to Kirkham he speaks also: 'Kirkham 'Abbey,—beautiful, though in ruins; the Nave nearly 'perfect, except the roof;—noble trees growing 'round it. A beautiful river runs by. Apple-trees 'blossom and shed their sweets; while the bees are 'feeding on these. A sadly sweet and solemn sight. 'We heard not the choral anthem, nor the organ; 'but the wind sighing among the noble trees, and 'the distant railway shriek: that told the dread tale 'too true, that the days of the glory of God's house 'were passed away.'

On his return to London, he took Birmingham in the way, and his friend Gillott at Edgbaston: 'spent Wednesday there pleasantly. After breakfast, 'went to the Catholic College at Oscott, by invitation 'of the Bishop, (Wiseman),—the festival of Corpus 'Christi: a grand ceremony,—high mass and pro-'cessions. Stanfield and Herbert were there. We

'then dined. The Bishop showed us his curiosi-
'ties in the Museum: splendid chalices, and vest-
'ments;—and was very kind. A gentleman,—Mr.
'Hardman, gave me a seat in his carriage to Bir-
'mingham; showed me the Convent, built by Pugin,
'and endowed by his father,' for 'Sisters of Mercy;
'whose avocation is to visit the poor, the sick, &c.:
'—the order, economy, ventilation, and cleanliness,
'admirable.'

As a preliminary to retirement from familiar duties at the Academy, Etty had given a farewell dinner to the Council. Of this date, I find some harmless doggerel in Etty's usual style of pleasantry, entitled the 'Parting Councillor's Lament,' and breathing his last adieus,—now that his 'Council 'nights are done,'—to customary, social 'cups of tea,' 'Charley Landseer's pun,' and 'Tommy Uwins' joke;' to which 'rain the joyous laugh.

'Adieu, ye grave petitions!
* * * *
'Adieu, probation drawings;'

and 'city jaunts' to London-docks,

* * 'to free the Artist's box!'

The *Joan of Arc*, his parting acquittance and act of fidelity to the Historic and high aims, achieved,—the crown of a lifetime's labours;—Etty felt free to return to that fanciful range of subject which had engrossed him of late years. The *Fleur de Lis* was the first work to occupy him. From his letters to Mr. Wethered,—for whom he was painting it,—we obtain interesting glimpses of the Picture's progress: more

than can ordinarily be gathered of the history of his works from Diary or Letter.

'I should not like anybody to see it, he urges, (*August 12th*), 'till the design is complete. It is now 'seen to disadvantage. The frame will take a con-'siderable time to complete. But as I have really 'disobliged Colls, Gillott, and my other friends, to 'meet *your* wishes, and am so driven up in a corner, 'to get anything done,—actually to keep them quiet, 'I must beg of you a little grace; feeling I have a 'just right to ask it of you. Lord Byron says the 'monument, that above all he ever saw, pleased him, 'was—'*Implora pace!*'

'I now implore the same thing; and know your 'goodness of heart too well to doubt your comply-'ing with the Petition of an almost overwrought 'Painter.'

'Let the *Fleur de Lis,*' he repeats, 'rest awhile. It 'is in a very delicate state, and should not be moved. 'The frame, I trust, will give it the *coup de grace.* 'I have been painting three days on *Joan of Arc,* (again); 'and thinking almost three of the Descrip-'tion,' (already quoted from): 'written myself almost 'blind, and got a headache by it.'

August 24th.—'I am glad you like my sketch of *Joan,* in pen and ink.—Your circular picture, (the *Fleur de Lis*), 'has been *much* coveted. Now 'I have stopped you from sending me any com-'missions, I am going to propose one myself: which 'you may take or not, as you like. But if you don't, 'you're a flat. If you give me fifty, or it may be 'sixty guineas more, (as expenses and trouble grow 'out of it), I propose to carry the Picture somewhat

'further:—to have a piece of white marble at each 'corner, on which colour and gold, carrying 'through the richness of the Picture's colour to the 'very edge;' and 'to paint, *myself*, the four spandrils, 'with a flower in each on the gold. * * If you 'consent, you will have something unique for your 'boy: which, like good wine, will improve by keep-'ing, till he gets of age.'

The Painter has himself 'chosen a lovely bit of 'creamy marble; which is 'progressing beautifully.' 'But you must not hurry me,' he reiterates; 'nor wish 'it sent down before the Exhibition.'

The frame to the *Fleur de Lis* was one,—Artists were fain to remark,—which would have 'killed' outright, any other picture. At the Adelphi Exhibition, a friend, ignorant of its origin, casually inquired of the Painter, 'who could have put the picture into 'that outrageous frame.'—'I designed it myself,' was the unforeseen reply.

Etty was working this Autumn more busily than ever before, at that season of the year. By the end of August he has 'nearly done all, and more, than he had anticipated.'—'Up early,' commences the account, (*to his Niece*), of one of these busy days: 'had 'my bathe; walked to Lambeth.—Poor Westminster 'Bridge! Barry is a Destructive. It was the finest view in the world: from *it* up the river, on a summer 'Sunday afternoon. But 'tis going. Thank God, 'they can't improve the Sunshine, and the light of 'Heaven and the breeze of morning. Something is 'left, when I have them and Thee.'

Hard pressed, he is: having 'nine pictures to complete, pack up, and take with him, to Mr. Gillott's;'

on his way to York. There, he does 'not expect to stay long:' is anxious 'to get back, and about the 'Pictures' he intends for next Exhibition,—'while the 'weather is fine.' In September, from his York lodgings, Etty, often looking in on his future home, finds it 'surpass his most sanguine expectations:' it, and the improvements made,—the bow windows thrown out in his Painting-room facing the river,—for he was a great lover of bow windows: familiar acquaintances from childhood. More than once, as we saw, he had interceded for such with York tradesmen, (unsuccessfully), when threatened by 'Improvement.'—'Atkinson has really pleased me,'—he tells his Niece, (*September 22nd*),—'with the way he has carried everything 'through: even to the garden and out-offices. The 'only regret is, that we cannot immediately occupy it. 'I sat in the Painting-room to-day, in the arm-chair, 'looking up the river;' and 'heard the breeze blowing 'the tide up,'—'the whistling of the wind, the babbling 'of the waves: could hardly tear myself away,—sitting 'ruminating. A ring at the bell.—'Twas a friendly 'voice; Isaac Spencer:' who is, (of course), like the rest of the world, 'enchanted with the house.'

* * 'I met Mr. Hudson,' (of Railway Fame), 'on Tuesday. He, with his usual frankness and good 'feeling, instantly asked me down to Newby Hall. I 'could not go that day:—went yesterday. He took 'me by the rail eighteen miles, and then in his carriage 'and four. A fine old mansion house;—fine old oaks, 'by the fine river Swale. He brought me and Mr. 'Nicholson back this morning. Sir Robert Peel came through York at the time. The Lord Mayor intro-

'duced me to him. He' (Sir Robert) 'shook hands 'with me cordially; seemed glad to see me. They cheered him much at the Station.'

September 4th—from 'My house, Coney Street:' he gossips in a similar strain.—'I have got fires lighted; 'and sit looking at a very pretty view:—green fields, 'trees, and rippling river. How I love it!—only 'want my dear Bairn here to enjoy' the same. 'Here 'are no steam-boats in sight.'—'A place after my own 'heart.'—'This is the place, and the only.''

September 5th, again.—'Have just returned from 'Minster Prayers, after a walk from Huntington;—'a nice walk:—now and then stopping, and leaning 'over a gate, to see the cows chewing the cud. 'The sun is setting golden, shedding his parting 'beams into my chamber. The trees are gently 'moving. And all is peace. * * The Italians 'say, of a house or room, in which the sun never 'enters:—*there* the physician must. This one is 'like a palace of the Sun. The morning and the 'evening sun peeps in.'

By *September 22nd*, again in London; he is again at work on the *Fleur de Lis*: 'carrying it higher in 'tone and colour,'—'making one or two little sketches of flowers, with reference to it. If you want it,' he warns Mr. Wethered, 'what I wish to have it, 'as near perfect as possible,—as my means and 'powers will let me,—you must not be impatient: '*you* will be the loser. Besides, it does not depend 'on myself only; but also, on the Statuary and frame-'maker.'—'You have enough to look at, with-'out it.'—'A rich Citizen, the day before yester-

'day, could hardly be prevented carrying off' said '*Fleur de Lis, vi et armis.*'

Our next excerpt closes the year with a reminiscence.

* * 'In addition to the solemn thoughts,'—writing to his old friend Mrs. Bodley, (*December 24th*),—'the present important season should inspire, and which has always made me feel the 'term "merry Christmas," out of place, I have an 'additional motive for serious thought on this day:— 'nine and twenty years ago, I lost my dear Father.'

At the end of 1847, about the time changes were being effected in the governing constitution of the head School of Design, Etty,—in contemplation of his retirement to York,—resigned his place at the Council Board: it being with him 'a point of 'principle not to retain any situation, of which he 'was unable to fulfil the duties.'

It was simply love of York, which had kept him there so long, 'Desirous,' as is related, in a subsequent Speech, 'to watch, at head-quarters, over the 'interests of this, our School,' (the York), 'I served 'as many years in that Council, as Jacob served, to 'obtain a wife: without fee or reward; at a great 'expense of time and feeling,—which I could ill spare.' The favourite object of his solicitude having successfully passed through its three years of probation,—had been renewed by Government;—and had now completed its fifth year. Going on, 'with credit to 'itself, and satisfaction to the Council in London;' it continued to do so, as long as Etty lived. Among other evidences of his interest, the School was in-

debted to him for a Plaster Cast,—the second ever executed,—from Flaxman's *Shield of Achilles;* which he had busied himself to procure from Mr. Neeld, the possessor of the original: who assured the Painter, to none but himself would he have granted the boon. At the Christmas meeting of 1847, a letter from Etty, announcing the gift, dwells on the beauties of this masterpiece of the Poetic Sculptor,—'himself a native of York, (baptized at Bishop Hill 'Church),' Etty as usual, is proud to remember:—'native of the same city with Alcuin the Learned.'

February 2nd, 1848:—he reports, that he has 'again begun to paint, and with a zest of pleasure, 'on the *Waters of Babylon.*' During the remainder of the Spring, he continued busily engaged in finishing his Pictures for the Exhibition.

The only chance which yet remained to Etty, of prolonging his life, was to forsake his old acquaintances,—night-fog, and heated Life-Academies. This was only to be done, by flight from London itself. As long as he remained in Buckingham Street, he could not break through the habit: 'If he had to 'die,—might as well die,' (he would aver), 'at the 'Academy, as at home.' To the last, though much too ill to attend the Schools, and suffering more and more, he was still to be seen, ascending the Academy stairs: resting at each half-flight, panting for breath; his head on his arm, that on the stair-rail. Breathless and exhausted, he would reach the School; then,—after a while,—set to work in full vigour, as of old. And a fine Study was speedily the result.

'I believe,' mentions Mr. Maclise, 'I was the Visitor

'in the School, when he made his last Painting, 'from the Model:'—last, previous to Retirement, that is. 'And I saw with pain, how more than usu- 'ally distressed he was: when he arrived at the top 'of the staircase, labouring for breath. I sat near 'him while he was making his Study. And we 'talked in whispers together. It so happened, that 'he spoke of his residence in Venice, where he spent 'exactly, he said, a year: and, with a smile he added,— 'alluding to his copies and Studies from Titian,— '"sucking the *Sweets*." He made on that very evening, 'a most splendid and glowing splash of colour, from 'the Figure, that quite rivalled the original before us, 'in all the splendour of lamp-light.'

On Mr. Maclise's visiting York in the year after Etty's death, he recognised, at a Dealer's, a chalk Drawing by his friend, of one of the last Figures he, as Visitor, had set for him; a man with his knee up,— who, as will not unseldom happen, fainted after long sitting in that attitude:—which study the Dealer politely presented to Mr. Maclise. During this, almost his last season of attendance at the Academy, Etty gave an instance of his customary kindness by exchanging studies with a Student. A thing he had now and then done before, when he thought the Student's point of view better than his;—sometimes adding life-informing touches of his own:—an exchange, such as was always, of course, felt to be a great honour by the fortunate Student.

It pleased Etty, at this period, (1848), to find himself making an important figure in a fine Collection of modern Pictures, a gentleman of York was forming,

He rejoices at the 'agreeable information,' writing (*April 4th*), to Mr. Andrews, that the latter had bought the *Robinson Crusoe;* 'and that it was to be 'sent to York!—there I hope *to remain*. I congra- 'tulate myself, and you, on this event, which I have 'long desired:—either to possess myself, or some 'esteemed friend. It is a most especial favourite of 'mine. If you ever part with it, pray don't do so, 'without giving me the refusal.

'By not coming down to York as early as at first 'intended, I have been enabled to add several Pic- 'tures to the three I intended to send to the Exhi- 'bition. I have sent seven. The last and least, 'a Landscape Study, painted at Givendale; into 'which I introduced a figure of a shepherd and two 'or three sheep.—I sold it yesterday morning. So 'all are sold, except *John the Baptist,*—a large figure, 'of the colossal size.'

These seven, dissimilar enough from the previous year's contribution, were a no less characteristic one. If, in fact, we are to look for the new excellence *specially* characteristic of Etty's latter style, a style alone, as I have said, consistent with his infirm health and strength;—for works adequately representing the last phase of his power;—we must turn, not to the *Graces,* or the second *Choice of Paris;* but to the *Fleur de Lis;* the *Waters of Babylon,* (both of this year); *'Tis but a Fancy Sketch,* (of 1844); and a few other like masterpieces: masterpieces, of a different kind to any of his former, and unexampled in Art. They are works as distinctive in sentiment, as any painted by him, and even more wonderful in Colour.

As in all the products of Etty's later practice, we have 'slightness and boldness of execution,' resulting in 'perfect finish at a distance.' 'A masterly style, 'masterly without rudeness,' declares Mr. Leslie. At the latter's Lecture on Etty's works, the *Fleur de Lis* was greeted by the Students with a round of applause: —not without reason. That bright group of youthful heads is the Triumph of this style; as signal a triumph as ever came to life under Etty's hands: for glory of Colour, and lyrical glow as it were, unsurpassed, nay, unapproached by any Master. In no other Picture, ancient or modern, is sunlight, the 'glow of summer noonday,' given to equal perfection. Unmistakable enough, in this *riant* composition, so simple, yet so charmingly felt, is that expression of Happiness, Mr. Leslie notices in Etty's Pictures: the involuntary expression of his heart, — of his 'constitutionally serene mind,' his vivid and simple nature. The Picture is, truly, embodied sunshine, —a very burst of visual harmony, a radiant Dream; worthy to be the crowning gem in some King's Palace: were such Personages themselves worthy, oftener, to possess the creations of Genius.

Etty charged Mr. Wethered a very moderate sum for the *Fleur de Lis*. It sold, in 1852, for 1000 guineas: the same price being realized at the same time by *'Tis but a Fancy Sketch*.

The colossal *St. John*, of which he had been 'three years thinking,' and the *Aaron*, were distinguished by vigour, fire, and of course, magnificence of Colour. For Etty gained rather than lost in capability for swift harmonious fusion of hue. Similar

merits, similar defects, characterize *Morning Prayers*, —a powerful, if slovenly sketch,—and another study of Colour, in 'Still Life.'

The holiday month of April did not pass over without alarms. 'Recollecting the French days of '1830,' whereof he had been an eye-witness, Etty, during the year of Revolutions, was not free from apprehensions, — even in tranquil England: on the 'dreaded 10th *really* listened with expectation of hear-'ing the growl of Artillery,—which had passed through 'our proud Metropolis a day or two before,—and the 'sharp rattle of musketry! and prayed God to avert 'from our capital the stain of human blood, which 'had dyed the pavements of so many of Europe's 'capitals. * * What an extraordinary madness 'seemed to have possessed the minds of European 'people:—with some few exceptions.' Established Respectability dreams not of a *cause* for Discontents; snug and comfortable itself, esteems a suspension of its peaceful quiet the worst ill that can befal the world:—is duly 'thankful to Almighty God those 'rascals, (the Chartists) quailed;'—'our Government 'and Police' having 'done wonders.'—'Look in the '*Times* to-day,' — Etty had adjured one friend, (*April 6th*),—'for one of the finest things I have a 'long time seen: the Declaration of the Emperor 'of Russia! Thanks be to God! there is yet some 'right feeling left, when all the world seems 'mad!' In 1848-9, the Russian Emperor was taken to be the saviour of Peace and Order, by more persons, — and professing to be more far-sighted, than Etty.

The next Alarm (from Fire) was a better-grounded one.—'To be awakened, my dear Thomas,' (*to Mr. Bodley*), 'from a pleasant dream to a frightful reality, 'is one of those startling situations in this changeful 'Life, which passeth as a dream:'—wont, as we have seen, to diversify the calm of Buckingham Street. 'After a tranquil and happy day, sunk to a pleasant 'dream,'—he narrates to another friend (*May 24th*),—'a frightful alarm roused me and my dear Niece. 'Flames of fire seemed enveloping our sacred and re-'tired dwelling. My Niece burst into my room in wild 'dismay.—A fire, like the end of the world, was fear-'fully illumining all around.—"What is it? where is 'it?" "Get up! get up!"—Rings at the bell to 'alarm us of danger. I partly dressed, and got on 'the adjoining roof to see the extent of the danger. 'Never was my poor residence in such fearful immi-'nence. Fortunately, the wind was the right way, and 'took the innumerable sparks in another direction. 'The mass of fire and flame,—the crackling of 'timbers, was something most awful. By numerous 'engines, and a cordial co-operation of the people, 'who sang in chorus while they worked; and by the 'great exertion of the firemen, in about an hour, 'it was much got under: and the danger of its 'spreading stopped.'

The 'Moon rose in silent majesty on the scene; 'and the Market' (Hungerford) 'was saved.' It was the fated 'Straw warehouse,'—so fruitful a source of alarms,—which had taken fire. Not without reason, Etty had 'expected that ere the morning light, his own 'dear dwelling, and works of Art, would have been

'in ashes.' If the wind had lain the *wrong* way,' (for him), 'oil warehouse, seed warehouse, and Painting-'rooms must have gone.' In the very previous year, a similar 'dread alarm,' and from the same 'source,—an alarm for which they had 'been looking 'all the Winter,'—had happened to his Niece during his absence in Yorkshire.

CHAPTER XXVII.

RETIREMENT. 1848-49. (ÆT. 61-2.)

Removal—A Happy Employment—York Gatherings of his Pictures—Finally settles down—Fellowship with the Printers—Is missed in London—Employments: Autobiography—Kindness to the Struggling—An old Habit resumed—Winter in York—Pictures in Hand—Fluctuating Health—Proposal from the Society of Arts—A Hitch at Manchester—Negotiation—*Coup de Main*—An English Spring—A Fallen Potentate—His Champion—Discouragements.

In June, the final flitting was commenced from the 'dear banks of the Thames,' to those equally dear, of the Ouse. Etty, by himself in York, presides over the transfer of movables, and household gods; casts, armour, books, '*précieuses choses*,' and some thousand Pictures, Studies, Copies, &c.;—'forty cases' in all, 'some almost as big as a house.'—Superintendence of the unpacking was a happy task. 'Be careful of that,' he tells the Carpenter, 'it was 'painted the day I was chosen Academician;'—'of 'that,—it is my best Picture.' And when, out of many hundreds, one, a favourite and very fine Study, (a Male Figure stooping, his hands on his feet), does not at first come to hand from the Railway; he is more concerned about it, than for all the rest. Etty was not ignorant of the rare value of his Studies. In moments of weakness, having been tempted to sell certain of the chosen band of his

favourites, and most excellent; his nights were sleepless,—as he would himself narrate,—till he had repossessed himself of them. One of those with which (in Life), he could never be seduced to part, now in the possession of a Nephew, the Rev. Walter Etty, was an athlete striving upwards;—at whose side is written in chalk, in Etty's hand, the characteristic spur to flagging or weariness:—'To faint 'or loiter, when only a little effort!'

'My place in London,' writes Etty from York, (*June 14th*), 'of which I love in my heart every stick, hole, 'and corner; seems to have done its work.' There, 'at 'the end of Buckingham Street, in the upper set of 'Chambers, I have enjoyed happiness and peace for 'upwards of twenty-one years.'—'And, if I live till 'next year, shall have been in the building a 'quarter of a century.'—'Fifty years, this year, 'it is, since I left this dear Old City, and my 'dear Mother and Father, to go among strangers. '*He* has blessed me during that long period; and 'brought me back in peace, to within a stone's throw 'of where I was born. * *. I have returned, 'bless God! with Fame, an unblemished reputation, 'and a fortune large enough, or small enough, for 'all my moderate wants.'

Immersed in the chaos of new arrangements,—busied on 'a Hanging Committee of his own,'—the Painter reports progress with due particularity: how, daily, the aspect of affairs mends; that 'the principal 'Painting-room is finished, and looks well;' or that he has hung 'all the Copies' in the 'upper great 'Painting-room,' and the Titian (*Ariadne in Naxos*)

'looks grand over the fireplace; the Jordæns little less, 'at the opposite end.' Sitting in his 'best bed-'room,' he thinks it 'really an improvement on the 'old favourite bed-room:'—'looking right to the upper 'end of the great room, with Lord Northwick's 'Titian over the fireplace.'

Eschewing dinner-parties, as far as may be, the Painter totters about York, happy in arrangements and preparations, to avail, as it will prove, so brief a while: happy in the House and its situation,—one, 'of 'all others in or near York, he most likes;' happy in his native City, from which he feels 'a wish never 'to move again;' in the 'dear Minster,' where a stall is allotted him, 'commanding a glorious view of the 'Choir.' Within his 'delightful house,' whence hearing 'the chiming of bells, the tone of the organ, from the 'neighbouring Church, and the singing,'—he 'feels 'as much at home almost, as if he had been fifty years 'there.' His Niece's room finished,—whereof especially, and its pretty adornment, he had made a labour of love: he is impatient for the 'only thing want-'ing,'—her presence.

Slight alloys to his felicity he finds in such occurrences as the recent destruction of the old Mill,—familiar to his boyhood,—his Father had occupied. For which loss he consoled himself, 'by having arm-'chairs' made of some of its old oak:—of the ladder his Father's 'beloved steps had descended' so often.

The close of the Exhibition called him to his dismantled rooms in Buckingham Street; which he wisely retained, partly furnished, for occasional use: and where, (now), '*St. John* lifts his arm, and seems to

'call aloud! and the *Fleur de Lis* blooms in its gold 'white marble and flower frame.'

Anxious that an important Picture of former years,—*Amoret freed by Britomart*,—then in Mr. Colls' hands,—should rather find a home in native York, than return to alien Lancashire, whence it had just been sold; Etty interested himself in recommending it to a York friend: assuring him, truly enough, that he should 'not again paint such a Picture.' That gentleman did ultimately purchase it, for £500. Etty himself had received for it, in 1833, £150. York was beginning to possess a considerable number of Etty's works. Another friend, Mr. Nicholson, had accumulated, (from the Dealers chiefly), as many as fifty or sixty. To the Painter, this 'Assemblage of 'his Children around him in his old age,' and the premiums which they commanded, were sources of quiet satisfaction: the former destined, however, to no long life. York, the city of Hudson, had lent itself to the Railway fever; and, of course, tasted, in the fulness of time, its proportionate share of the inevitable consequences. On the 'Railway King's' dethronement in 1849, many shared in his reverses; who had till then been saved harmless. Both collections had ultimately to pass under the auctioneer's hammer: leaving to York,—scattered in various corners,—not more than a dozen gems from Etty's hand, chiefly Portrait.

September 16*th*, the Painter returned finally to York; settling down (as he fancied) for good; and feeling that the 'time of retirement from the busy 'world had fully come.' On the 22*nd*, he reports himself to Mr. Colls, 'comfortably established in my

'native city, and happy that I *am* there:' despite 'all my love and admiration for London and my 'good friends there.' In a house which 'is a Free-'hold, and his own,' well-fitted for Painting; with its views of the river and of objects he loved; whence, 'though in the centre of everything,' he, 'in five 'minutes, can be among green fields and trees;' a 'glorious Cathedral' near, where he 'can worship 'God in the beauty of holiness; fragments of the 'piety and splendour of ancient times around:' here, he anticipates years of tranquil happiness, surrounded by kind friends, and fellow-townsmen who had learned to hold him in respect as a successful Painter, and 'very worthy man much attached to 'York.'

'Mark well YORK,' he exclaims, across Seas, to his Brother in Java: 'you thought, I dare say, I should 'never get there. But *I have*, you see! There, is the 'Ouse flowing under my windows. And the sun is set-'ting on the other side of it; showing a beautiful peep 'of landscape up the river.—The ferry-boat is rowing 'across with a passenger. And the trees tho' changing 'a little in colour, are yet green and pleasant.'

Oct. 1*st*, he reports, that after finally completing arrangements of prints and pictures, he had 'painted 'a little yesterday, for the first time' in his new abode. On the 8*th* was celebrated, in 'old York' itself, the fiftieth anniversary of his departure for Apprenticeship and Hull. 'Half a century,'—he reiterates as usual,—'since I left Mother's apron-strings—a loving child 'of eleven and a half years old, to go out into the wide 'world! I have returned to the place whence I came, 'after many wanderings and exertions.' He takes care

to send his neighbours, the working Hands of the *York Herald* Printing Office, 'five shillings to drink his 'health,' in remembrance of *his* having been a Printer. Fond of identifying himself as 'one of them,' he did the like by the *Yorkshire Gazette* office. In London, too, he had been in the habit of sending his annual contribution to some Printers' *chapel*. 'I look some-'times at your men,'—he tells Mr. Hargrove,—'and think of bygone days.' From the back windows of his house he obtained a glimpse of them at their work. And it became one of the retired Painter's amusements to drop in and watch their familiar operations; or gossip of printing as it was in *his* time, when the whole Newspaper was worked-off by hand: dismal recollections not being omitted of working on a Sunday for Peck's *Hull Packet*. He would exchange notes with the foreman, who had been apprentice to that same Peck after Etty's time:—and promise to 'set up a stick some day.' In his annual visits to Hull, he had always kept up his recollections of 'bygone times,' by a call at Peck's office; and one day *did* set up in type a line:—'How long it is since 'I was a Printer!'

He still pays the old accustomed visits to Feasegate, 'to see the old place,' or as much of it, as Improvement had spared. He still,—and in fact, till the very last month of his life,—makes the old accustomed calls on those anywise connected with past times; from the earliest to the last: not forgetting his Gillygate landladies, the Miss Burnets; nor again, the young girl,—now not so young,—once his companion in servitude at Hull.

In his London haunts, the energetic Painter began to be missed. The November fog,—its old combatant fled—'hangs about Buckingham Street, 'as if trying to find you out,' avers one friend. 'The 'Life-School,' (of the Academy), complains the Keeper, 'hardly looks right without you; and the 'shelf for Studies unnatural.' Others had heavier cause to lament the Painter's absence. The humble custodian of his Chambers, on whom he had laid the charge of forwarding the earliest news of Academic doings,—who is the newly-elected Associate, who 'Visitor' for the current month, &c.; among other details,—friendly messages from brother Academicians, or from disciples;—reports 'a deal 'of distress among the Models since you left. 'Bishop's wife has died,—and Mendoo is in the 'Hospital. And the female Models *return down the 'stairs, in tears:'* finding their constant Patron gone.

They had lost their best friend. In the habit of regularly employing two or three Models a day, for an hour or two each, Etty had also interested himself in their well-doing;—had bestirred himself to recommend them to other Artists: often, when they fell sick, calling on them, and refusing not succour.

In the absence of accustomed avocations, he found an engrossing one during the dull season of the year, in penning the short and desultory *Autobiography*, which appeared in the *Art Journal*. Full of so novel an incident in his career, as turning his own Biographer, he, to York friends, recites its substance;—and to distant ones, apologizes for the

step. As he had formerly painted his own Portrait, 'merely to please his dearest Mother, so now,'—he tells Mr. Bodley,—he was, 'by others led into' *writing* one: in the hope of 'doing some good,' to a young Cousin, 'in the office of the *Art Journal*, by whom Mr. Hall applied to him 'to furnish heads and data.' At some pains to acquaint his friends of the impelling 'unavoidable circumstances,'—'I have been induced,' he apprises the Keeper, 'to be guilty of 'a piece of egotism, I never intended. But thought 'I had better write what I knew was truth, than 'leave them to make it up by conjecture.' Again, later, to Sir Martin Shee:—'I found myself, to 'my surprise, in a late number of the *Art Journal*, 'in juxtaposition with a Memoir of *you*.'—'I 'thought, if I furnished heads and points myself, 'and the intervening parts were filled up by one who knew nothing of me; it might pass current,—'but not be true.'

This Sketch of his life, he wrote with much ease and rapidity. Imperfect, as a narrative, but a vivid and graphic piece of writing, it is, above all things, *characteristic*,—in its very incoherences: giving a faithful and life-like idea of the writer. 'The man 'himself!' said of it, all who knew him. The evidence borne on its face, to his simplicity of character and earnestness, to the singleness and purity of his aims,—came as a surprise on many. They had been little prepared for it, by a casual sight at the Exhibition, of Pictures, which current preconceptions as to the sensuousness and indelicacy of the undraped human form, had prevented their un-

derstanding. The real Etty turned out a very different figure, from the Etty of their fancy.'

The manifest sincerity,—that rare and difficult attribute of writing, (not to be won by trying for it), and the fidelity of self-portraiture, drew down golden opinions. From more than one,—stranger, as friend,—he received spontaneous Letters of thanks, for the pleasure and encouragement afforded by his *Autobiography*:—thanks too, for 'his testimony in 'favour of religion and virtue.'

Applications for advice and aid from mere tyros in the Art, till the last continued to be made on Etty: and till the last to be responded to. A humble provincial Amateur sees a Picture of his, in the Nottingham Exhibition; and shrewdly suspects some peculiarity in the ground. Will Etty communicate the nature of it,—if no secret? The Master of the York School of Design, anxious to improve himself in the study of the Figure, Etty voluntarily assisted with valuable counsel and example.

A characteristic instance of his accessibleness and kindness to the struggling occurred, soon after his retirement to York. An unknown Norwich painter, or aspirant to be a painter,—'anxious to rise from a 'humble sphere of life,'—having seen some Etty's, in the Norwich Exhibition, wrote to the famous Colourist, to express his earnest desire 'for a few lessons:' or, at any rate, will he send 'a list of his flesh tints,' and his mode of applying them? The veteran *does* send him advice and elementary information, interesting, as coming from so great a Master; and which tallies with what has before been said of Etty's 'vehicle,' &c.

'Power in the Art,' he assures his unknown correspondent, must be 'gained more by an Artist's own 'ideas and exertions, than reliance on a Master's 'instruction.—In your practice, be as simple as 'possible. A few colours: Naples yellow, light 'red, Indian red, a little vermilion, lake, Terre 'verte,—or blue,—raw umber, burnt ditto, and 'black; are about enough. The application, practice 'must give you. As to the vehicle to paint with:— 'a little sugar of lead, finely ground, about the size 'of a bean, rubbed up with your palette knife; in a 'teaspoonful of mastic varnish. Add to this, two 'spoonfuls of cold drawn linseed oil. Mix them well 'up together. If you like, add a little spirits of 'turpentine, as much or as little as you please. And 'with a large brush rub over the canvas or picture 'you have to paint on!' This 'is the best me- 'dium:'—'a vehicle that will keep the flesh tints 'pure.'—'And,' it is added, 'practise as much as you 'can!'

A year later,—the day, in fact, previous to Etty's death,—arrived a letter from the same Artist, soliciting further kindnesses: then beyond the Painter's power to grant.

Do what he might to mitigate the first *ennui* of seclusion, of the exile from familiar employments, he could not quite evade it. One habit among those interrupted by his retirement was of too long standing, and too firmly planted, to be abruptly broken through. Daily study from the 'Life,'—the passion and delight of his career,—he could not, at this late stage, renounce. One day, a few months after his settling at

York, a friend found him much out of spirits. His old habits broken through,—'no Royal Academy, no 'School in Margaret Street,—no Models,' he feels himself utterly at a loss. He fancied, York being a small place, he could not have a Model without scandal,—a mob perhaps, or what not:—feared he 'should 'have to go back to London.' His friend offers to settle the difficulty; and does so. A Model was found, and approved of. Next day, Etty,—all eagerness to paint from the 'Life' again,—begins:—throws in his glorious white and red. Other Models followed. If they could not have been obtained, *he* certainly could not have stayed peaceably in York. For he lived in his Art. 'Take away my painting,' he would say, 'and you take my life: *better* take that at once.' This, when friends reminded him of his maladies; and counselled caution.

'We have made a start with the *Life* here,' he exultingly acquaints Mr. Wetherell, (*December* 13*th*); 'and have had Models of both sexes. During the winter, several fine studies were painted from Madame Wharton,—an old acquaintance; who paid York a visit with her *Poses Plastiques*. The introduction of the male Model at the School of Design took place, also, through his means. Despite opposition, Etty urged its continuance. As long as he lived, and till the death of the then Master, (Patterson), it *was* continued: at the latter's expense, assisted by some of the Scholars.

Etty had but one regular Pupil in his life. 'It is 'out of my power to give lessons,' he had assured the Norwich artist. And the same he repeated to

the Master of the York School of Design: allowing him, however, to bring his easel and paint beside him: as the friend who has supplied much of the information before given as to 'Medium,' &c.,—Mr. Collis, had before done. During this same winter also, Mr. Harper, a York friend and amateur, painted in Etty's Studio. Under our Historical Painter's influence, the amateur forsook Landscape for a while, and the drawing master exchanged fruit pieces, which he could paint very fairly, for the 'highest style,' the Figure: —Etty dashing in a bit here and there.

Frequent visits to the local School of Design he had himself established, and regarded now with quite parental feelings, numbered among the duties and pleasures of Etty's York life: with practical encouragement of the Students, by advice, example, the loan of his Pictures, &c. He took especial interest in the ladies' class, and much kind notice of promising pupils: giving one of the latter as a reward, a book from his own library, there being no prize that year in her department; touching on her painting, inviting her and her companions to see his pictures. All which was thought much of from a man of his standing. His advice to them was ever,—'Study 'Nature:'—'copy flowers from Nature, beginning with the leaves;'—and the like. One of the prizes given by himself and Brother Charles, as we saw, was for the best drawing from a common hedgerow flower. Often in these visits, which he continued to the last, he would have to rest, leaning against a desk, for half an hour,—or a whole one, ere he could find breath to say a word: sitting, like any other Student, on a

high hard stool,—as from long habit, he preferred doing in such places. At the annual meeting in December of the supporters of the School, he even found breath to deliver a speech.

November in York, and December, had passed with 'little or no fog,' he reports to Mr. Jones: 'which I 'like to escape. *You* have witnessed its effect on me.' Ever increasing difficulty of breathing prevented his 'doing much' during the 'cold dark days.' But he had not exchanged constant and unwearied industry for indolence. Several hours daily, he painted from the living Model; in the evening would sketch, according to custom, 'from Fancy,' or from the Old Masters. 'I am having a conversation with Raphael this 'evening,' would be his exclamation to a friend finding him, perhaps, sketching from Raphael's *Cupid and Psyche* series. By the beginning of 1849, he was making preparations for an important Picture,—the *Greek Bridal;* had had the canvas set up in his painting-room:—'the first step,' as he styled it. After *Joan of Arc*, he had talked of painting but 'one 'more' ambitious historical Picture. 'I have made up 'my mind to offer it you,' he had told Mr. Colls:—'*You* have put the golden crown on my head,'—alluding to the great price of the *Joan of Arc*.—'I am determined the world shall never see me *in* 'my decrepitude. I shall never leave off painting; 'but shall not exhibit after that Picture.'

He struggled through various attacks of his chronic maladies. Invitations to conversazione—'rural sports,' replies he, such as little suit him, and to which he was never much addicted,—these, or

others, fail, generally, in seducing him to stir out at night from his comfortable house: wherein, he keeps two comfortable rooms 'at a sort of Madeira climate,' —'the best for climate his doctor goes into.' Content 'to breathe and be warm at home, without 'further trouble,' he passed the winter at York 'with 'advantage:' beyond the reach of Life Academies, and their temptations 'to brave the noxious hydrogen 'of night air, fog, gas, stove-warmed rooms, and the 'dangerous transition from that heated atmosphere 'to a cold and damp journey home' on foot.— 'Cough and breath have benefited much.'

The remedy came late. For twenty years he had taken every liberty with his health; not only risking extraordinary vicissitudes of temperature,—from necessarily over-heated Life Academies to night fog, but neglecting common precautions: exposing himself to gratuitous risks, despite all Niece or Doctors could urge. 'Had he been,' declared one of the latter after his death, 'as kind to himself as to others, he 'would still be among us.' His naturally strong constitution and athletic frame had given promise of a longer life, than devotion to his Art suffered his to be. His nearest relatives all lived to a ripe age: both Father and Mother exceeding the allotted threescore years and ten; some of his grand parents attaining extreme ages. His Brother Walter died at seventy-five. His remaining brothers still survive:—two, similarly advanced in years.

Devotion to the *Life* certainly shortened *his* life by many years,—made him old before his time:—lesser imprudences by a few more. Imprudences, whereof

he could not to the last be broken. The same energy which had carried him through so many and severe struggles in his Art, which had enabled him to get through so vast a stroke of work in his time, despite all obstacles; was less profitably shown in self-willed defiance of the Seasons and of common consistency. Sometimes he dines out, contrary to his doctor's express injunction; sometimes makes himself breathless for an hour, by walking, where he should have ridden; —still oftener braves the cold air of winter in one thin coat: confessing himself, when he encounters his physician, a 'naughty boy,' expectant of 'a scolding.'

Fatiguing labours of an unexpected kind, but not ungrateful, were yet in store for the invalided Painter. The Society of Arts had determined to secure, if possible, Etty's pictures for their second, (and, as it proved, last), collective Exhibition of the Works of Living Painters. An expression of that wish reached him at the close of 1848, through his friend Mr. Roberts, the Academician, a member of the Society's Council, and one of those instrumental in bringing the business about. While soliciting the Painter's co-operation, he offered his own services in superintending the formation of the Collection. Etty, never indifferent to Fame, having during the greater part of his career lived for *it*, and for excellence in his Art,—alone, gave a glad consent to the scheme: but, justly thinking that for his own sake and for that of Art, 'if done at all, it should be done well,' named the presence of his 'Nine great works' as an 'essential' basis.

The Society's applications to the Scottish Academy,

to the Manchester Institution, and to other possessors of important specimens from Etty's hand, were backed by additional requests from himself. The Scottish Academy,—always honourably solicitous for his fame,—anticipated, with its habitual liberality and courtesy, the Painter's, by an instant and unanimous assent to the Society's request.

At Manchester, the same good fortune did not attend him. Official obstructions intervened. The first impediment raised by the (then) Honorary Secretary of the Institution, was the fact of an Exhibition being open in the same room with the *Sirens*, whereof that Picture formed an attractive, though scarcely novel feature. A second, less superable difficulty was borrowed from Etty's own mouth, the desire he had himself expressed nine years before:—that it should never be removed. In the Summer of 1840, the Painter, who watched his *chef-d'œuvre* with a jealous eye, had been thrown into considerable alarm and excitement by rumours,—eventually proving unfounded,—of its intended transfer to a new position; it having before been damaged in removals from room to room, by workmen unaccustomed to his pictures. Which injury, he had, at the cost of some anxiety and trouble, himself repaired. Fearing further mischief would be done, he, on the spur of the moment, wrote, (*July* 23*rd*, 1840); urging with some vehemence—that if the *Sirens* be 'attempted to be removed to the 'room below, it will be destroyed. For it is painted 'on that sort of ground which will chip off like 'plaster.' He 'trusts' the Council 'will pay him the 'compliment to consider it worth preserving:' con-

ceiving it himself 'one of the best Pictures he ever 'painted.' His object was, by stating the case strongly, to prevent such frequent changes of position.

The question was now drily enough put,—Did he make such and such statements? Of course, the Painter could not deny his own hand; must confess, however reluctantly, to the unlucky missive, so unpropitious to his present wish:—capable at least of that bias. But he explains, that he was not likely to be 'so mad as' to propose anything which would really injure one of his own Masterpieces: 'one of those 'great efforts of my Art,' confesses he, 'achieved in 'the vigour of my life, I can never make again;' explains, too, that a man accustomed to his works would be sent to pack the picture,—a step of itself obviating the risk previously apprehended by him. And he hopes Manchester, which, like Edinburgh, was 'one of 'the first places to foster him by its patronage, will not 'throw overboard this, my last, earnest solicitation.'

He neglects no chance of securing the much-desired link in that 'chain of Nine colossal works,' which forms so important a feature of his 'efforts in 'historic and poetic art.'—'Efforts,' he avers, 'made 'quite as much from motives of Patriotism as of 'individual interest,—or more so:' and such as he now confesses himself very desirous of 'putting before my 'countrymen, ere I go hence, to be no more seen.' In much excitement and anxiety, he applied to the first purchaser of the *Sirens*,—Mr. Daniel Grant, entreating *his* good offices. He penned a supplementary despatch to the Secretary, urging, that what will add

to the celebrity and consequent pecuniary value of the Picture, must be for the benefit of the Institution; reiterating, that he would 'as soon think of throwing 'a thousand guineas into the river opposite' as risk the destruction of the *Sirens*, or propose its removal, if he 'thought it unsafe, with the precautions' proposed.

To all which representations, those in power continue to turn a deaf ear: Secretary and Council still averse. The official mind dwelling in forms is always hard to convince, or to turn from a resolve once stumbled upon. For some time, Etty, not a little cast down, ceased not to repine at the anticipated blank in the brilliant assemblage of his beloved 'Children:' lamenting the letter which had proved so apt a handle against himself; and that he had ever let the Manchester folk have the Picture. His vexation was heightened by regrets that York friends had involuntarily missed it.

In this crisis, his active friend, Mr. Edward Harper, a man of business and of energy, offered,—to the great delight of the desponding Painter,—his personal services; started for Manchester: and there, by dint of prompt decision, and weighty introductions, gained the cause. He obtained a special meeting of the Council, argued the case before it,—and won unanimous consent, after brief debate, to the free loan of the *Sirens*: promising in return unheard-of precautions for its safety. A *Coup d'Etat*, which overjoyed Etty. The Institution had scarcely less reason to rejoice, at having been saved the discredit of refusal to serve the Painter, who, by his genius, had conferred on the City of Manchester a perennial benefit;—not to mention the easy terms on which the Picture had been obtained from him.

Meanwhile, amid 'petrifying cold,' and ever 'shorter breathing,' Etty had continued to paint,—but with difficulty,—for his next, and as it proved, final appearance at the Academy. Of the four ultimately sent, one, painted in a previous year, was borrowed of Mr. Wethered. The *Crochet-Worker*, a Study from the daughter of one of his Nieces,—a favourite 'subject' with him at this time,—was painted for Mr. Harper. It, and *Gather the Rose of Love, while yet 'tis time*, — a lovely group of youthful heads, — were products of the current year. *Eurydice*, a result of York studies from the *Life*, fluctuating health prevented his finishing for the Exhibition, as he had intended:—the busy cares which succeeded, prevented his finishing at all. At various periods of 1849, several studies similar in style to the *Crochet-Worker*, and from the same or similar 'subject,' amused his leisure: also destined to remain unfinished.

A note to his friend Patten, the Associate, (*April 3d*), shows Etty in good spirits, as the grand gathering of his works drew nigh;—despite such checks as had to be encountered. 'I see,' he gaily cries, 'thou 'art yet alive and kicking! I gave thee a scratch 'last Election: all I could do; and regret it did 'not bring *thee* to the scratch.—You have chosen a 'good subject! I trust you have done justice to it.'

The Spring proved cold and backward. His Letters to Mr. Wethered, bespeak its influence. * * 'I put you,' writes he, (*April 11th*), 'in the same boat 'with my beautiful bird,—a little joyous singing 'bird, called "Wanderer;" who, often in the darkest 'days, and when I have been low-spirited, cheers

'me by her song, as you do by your sunny letters. 'Its little heart brimful, and overflowing with joy 'and song, seems to say, "Why do you droop?"—The 'Sun, golden as his little "paletot," breaks out, per- 'haps: and all is gay! To-day, the sun smiles, after 'three of the darkest days I ever saw in York. On 'Easter Sunday, it rained all day. Monday and 'Tuesday were cold, dark, and heartless. To-day, 'I live again.'

Again, April 19th:—'I am *au désespoir* at this 'deathly cold! Nothing has its relish to me. No- 'thing really gives me pleasure. We have lost a 'dear relative, Miss Etty's Sister, Mrs. Purdon of 'Hull, a truly good creature; the mother of the little 'girl who used to be in London:'—and who, as a young woman, sat for the *Crochet-Worker*. 'The 'Wold hills are covered with snow. And all Nature 'seems undergoing a second death. Don't come 'down at present. All is chill, cold, and heartless. '* * Snow, hail, rain, wind, everything hateful and 'd——ble. But we are thankless creatures: we forget.'

1849 was the year of the notorious George Hud- son's Fall. By April of that year, no name was in so ill odour among the people of York, as that of the man, whose connection with their City had elated them a few years before; and whom they had been happy enough thrice to secure for their 'Lord 'Mayor.'

The Painter, loving neither Railways nor Railway speculation, did not make one of the herd who had joined the Railway Magnate's following from sordid motives. Mutual friends had brought him there. Once having been treated in a friendly manner, having

dined at his table, and so on;—subscribing in due course his friendly £5 to the famous 'Hudson Testimonial;'—Etty was not the man to think ill of a friend, (and Hudson was the relative of far nearer friends), because all the world said ill: scarcely, indeed, to credit the evidence of his senses, if opposing the impulses of his heart. He liked to think well of all the world, if he could. 'Do you think George 'Hudson dishonest?' he still, with a laudable thirst for information, asked valued friends:—'*I cannot* 'think so.' And one fine day in April, in the midst of the first odium of Hudson's disgrace, 'everybody 'in York' is astonished, by a Letter in the local Papers, signed 'William Etty,' defending Hudson: chiefly by an array of Scriptural texts,—very little to the purpose, but bespeaking the simplicity and guilelessness of the writer.

Hudson, he pleads, 'if he *were* even guilty, to 'the extent his worst enemies say he is, is still de- 'serving of that Charity which thinketh no evil, which 'commands us, "If your brother offendeth, thou 'shalt forgive him not only seven, but seventy times 'seven:"' &c. Etty did *not* number among those who had been brought to ruin, by putting faith in George Hudson and his like: or he might not have talked quite so amiably. Slightly inapplicable to their case, perhaps,—his remembrance of such texts; it contrasts favourably with the howl of those who had *not* been hurt, against the man so unanimously courted and bepraised, before he was 'found out.'

This much, in favour of 'practising at *home*' the 'beautiful maxims of Charity, Peace, and Love, so 'eloquently, beautifully and powerfully' put forth,

from York pulpits, and for the 'promulgation of which 'touching truths to the heathen *abroad*,' his fellow-citizens 'open their purses so liberally:' this much he says,—and more, 'supposing he *may* be culpable.' But 'were I to give my own opinion of the matter,' 'rashly,' continues he, 'I feel I should be safe, were I 'to risk my existence on the honour and honesty of 'George Hudson. That he may not at *all* times have 'had that *amenity* which wins, I am willing to allow. 'He was made for carrying this mighty Change. * * 'And none but a man of his power and energy 'could have done it. Bnt if I ever set eyes on a 'man,—and I have had some experience,—whose 'manly port, physiognomy, and whole bearing cha-'racterized *an Honest man*,—a man superior to all 'meanness,—it is George Hudson! a man I am proud 'to call my friend! because I know him to be kind-'hearted, generous, and public-spirited to the last 'degree. I was only twice in my life in a Railway 'carriage with him. And on one of these occasions,' 'Mr. Hudson gave £400 or £500 to a Church at Dar-'lington, for the Railway men, without hesitation.'—

'I'll swear—I'll swear, from that honest John Bull manner, he is honest,' Etty would exclaim. For in private as in public, he emphatically urged his conviction, that the ex-Railway King had been hardly dealt with. With such a faith it was well, he was cautious of his money!—The notion, that a swinging subscription in a public carriage, towards a new Church, was conclusive evidence in behalf of a public man, betrays profound insight into character, and much knowledge of the world.

To wiseacres unacquainted with the man, so

Quixotic a flight of Knight-errantry, as this volunteer defence of a disgraced potentate, was inexplicable. His known simplicity and integrity prevented evil constructions. Those who knew him, saw in it only a characteristic, if extreme, instance of the childlike goodness of heart, childlike unworldliness, and courageous good faith, of one still 'proud to call' the Defaulter 'his friend,' at a moment when—he had few companions in such friendly pride. To the last, the Painter remained an adherent (from afar) of the ex-King in his fallen fortunes.

As the Spring advanced, many unlooked-for incidents there were, to strike as chill to Etty's heart as the East wind to his 'trachea:' the death, already noticed, of a favourite Niece; the reverses of his 'friend' Hudson,—shortly followed by the suicide of another and nearer friend, ruined by implication in Railway speculations. The latter had been one of Etty's own staunchest adherents and cronies, of recent years: a kind-hearted man, and warm friend; a well-meaning, though ill-informed collector. Disaster reached Etty's heart no less surely, that it came through his friends.

One bright star was dawning, destined to shed a lustre and reward over the concluding scene of his life. He was himself beginning to anticipate 'a 'great display' from his assembled Works: at the same time, also, that he should 'not feel easy till they 'were all returned' to their respective owners, free from harm and risk. In health Etty was,—after a severe attack from his maladies during March and April,—materially better by the beginning of May.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LAST TRIUMPH. 1849. (ÆT. 62.)

Buckingham Street—Sunshine—Labours for the Show—Omissions—Just Cause for Pride—The 'Private View'—Results of the Exhibition — Merits of the Scheme — Friendly Sympathy — Tribute: Robert Browning—A Clever Counterfeit—Longings for Repose—Excitements of Town—Renewed Anxieties—A Groundless Fear—Illness—Release—Return to York—Peaceful Days—Struggling Health—Rash Experiments—Artist to the Last—The End.

On May-day, Etty quitted York, exchanging the quiet so long anticipated, and so briefly enjoyed, for an exciting and feverish Summer in Buckingham Street. He arrived in time for the Academy-dinner; at which,—the last he was to attend,—he was seen to suffer a good deal: his coat hanging awkwardly loose on his back,—for his frame was shrunken; and he, while the speech-making was going on, leaning with his elbows on the table, and hands to his head, struggling for breath.

It was after leaving York, while busied in getting his Works together, the first melancholy tidings of his warm-hearted Friend's suicide arrived, to alloy his happy anticipations; striking him an 'unexpected 'blow:'—'when getting much better, threw me back.' —'Sad work in York: I dare hardly think of it,' he exclaims,—of the domestic and social havoc due to the bursting of Railway bubbles. And, again:— 'May God have mercy on us and him! poor dear

'fellow! Oh! how deeply I have felt it!'—'You 'are quite right,'—writing later, (*June 15th*), to Mrs. Bulmer,—'in imagining my heart has been torn, '—riven by thunder-strokes from quarters whence 'I was least prepared to expect it.—All seemed 'sunny at Clifton. I called a day or two ere I left. 'The sun shone on the rooms,—on the Pictures, 'the gardens. Beautiful flowers were baring their 'sweet bosoms to the sun. The birds were singing, in 'doors and out. Elegances and Arts decorated the 'place within. It seemed everything man could 'wish:—the kitchen even, like a parlour. Alas! it 'taught me that all here is vanity. The kind-'hearted, benevolent individual, whose home it was,—'and whom I loved as a brother, had not, unluckily, 'that firmness requisite to withstand the blow of ill 'fortune. * * Truly, the world seems rife with 'calamity.'

Sunshine chequered gloom. On the 'same dark 'day, which brought news of poor N.'s untimely 'fate,' a letter arrived from Mr. Spencer, purchasing Etty's favourite *St. John*, which had hung on hand, (the only Picture to do so), since the previous year:—purchasing it at the considerable price of £450. The sum was straightway added to the 'Etty Fund;' as that received for the *Joan of Arc* had before been. A 'pleasant bit of sunshine,' the unexpected incident is to Etty. 'It will, indeed, be a pleasure,' he tells Mr. Spencer, (*May 20th*), 'to sit and chat with you: 'looking at one end of the room on *John the Baptist*, 'at the other, to the *Magdalene*.'

From personal joys and sorrows, the Painter was obliged to turn his attention to the all-engrossing

preparations for his Exhibition. Most of the holders of his Works, responded cordially to the call; several,—as Mr. Clow of Liverpool, in the case of the *Dance from Homer*,—offering their Pictures of their own accord. At first, the Painter was content with the prospect of a *selection* of his best Works. He himself excused Mr. Spencer from sending 'your lovely *Magdalene*:'—'will not disturb her repose 'in her sweet retreat of the Plantations.—There is 'enough without her to give them a taste of my 'quality.' An omission to be regretted, as of a Picture, in its class unrivalled.

A still more serious omission, was that of the collection of Ettys belonging to Mr. Owen of Cheltenham: including, among other fine specimens, 'that gem of yours,'—as Etty *naively* styled his much-prized child, when praying its presence,—*The Toilette of Venus*; ('Venus and her Satellites'); which 'never has been seen as it ought to be.' A gem it truly is, and comparatively unknown, combining, as before intimated, in moderate dimensions, the excellences of his most important works, and of his maturest years. On the ground of 'absence from 'home,' the fortunate owner declined sharing his privilege with the public: a real loss to the latter, and to Etty's reputation; which the Painter could not refrain from lamenting.

A chosen example of Etty's Art in another class,—Portraits of Lord Normanton's Daughter and youngest Son (as children), was also absent. The Picture was in London:—not so its possessor. By the Marquis of Lansdowne, no obstacle was made to

the removal from Bowood, while himself in Town, of the *Repentant Prodigal*:—content that a fit person was despatched for it from the Society of Arts. The Society in every case bore the expense of removal; and charged itself with the risk. The collection of Mr. Andrews, of York, including many pictures of signal value,—the *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Britomart*, &c.,—which, declared the Painter, 'we *must* have on 'any terms:' 'Prince Albert is coming, and we 'must get all the strength possible;'—could only be obtained on condition of their removal before the Exhibition's close.

To the anxieties and labours of collection, succeeded, during the first week in June, those equally arduous, of superintending the arrangement and hanging of his Pictures:—an arrangement which, when completed, bore eloquent testimony to the harmonizing hand of the great Colourist. The well-contrived concord of the whole, equalled the splendour of the constituent parts: a result, marvellously aided by the unfailing truth of Colour in each one of these.

'Very busy,' he reports himself, (*June 7th*), to Mr. Spencer.—'We shall have a glorious show. I should 'have liked to have seen your enthusiasm—Saturday' (next). 'But we must bottle it up for a future day. 'I know you will be pleased.'—'Please God, I will 'give then a taste of my quality. *Non nobis 'Domine!*—The *Sirens*; the *Combat*; the *Wise and 'Foolish Virgins*; the *Storm*; the *Death of Hero 'and Leander!* Come, my dear boy, as soon as you 'can. None will be more glad to see you. * *

'*P. S.* 'Awake my Glory,' (*David*), 'arrived this 'morning:'—two days before the Private View, that is.

The 'severe anxiety and exertion' of getting his Works ready for the public, was crowned by its reward.—'If ever I felt proud,' he, some months later, avowed to his old friend, Mrs. Bulmer, 'it 'was when, after great anxiety, exertion, and fatigue, 'I had completed the arrangement of them; and sat me 'down in a chair, in the midst of these my children: 'the noble *Judith*; the animated *Sirens*; last, not 'least, *Hero and Leander*;—with the Duke of Suther-'land's *Bevy of Fair Women*. I then felt it was 'something to be William Etty. I hope I did not 'feel too much elated. I *think* I did not.—We have 'had sad lessons lately of Life's vanity.'

'My Private View was Saturday,' he (*June* 11*th*), relates to his Brother. 'And the effect astonished 'all! Nobody seemed to expect what there awaited 'them. It was triumphant. I am thankful to 'Almighty God that *He* has spared me to see that 'day.' * *

A strange contrast the collection made to the 'dark problems' of poor Barry, which they covered from view:—the coherent attainment of excellence, instead of the barren aspiration towards it.

The general effect was unmistakable enough: a convincing display of varied, creative power; harmonious as imposing. A unanimous verdict was extorted. The one prevailing feeling was of admiration. None had seen an Exhibition to parallel it. For the Author of it, it proved a great day, unique in his life;

a peaceful triumph, fit sequel to a career of unfaltering labour and aspiration: some *per contra* to the stinted recognition accorded the majority of these noble works at the date of their production. It was a piece of 'poetic justice'—for once realized, an instalment of posthumous fame. The old man sat quietly happy, surrounded by 'his children,'—whose acquaintance he renewed under circumstances so novel and unexpected: singling out with especial favour a chosen few,—the *Judiths*, the *Sirens*, the *Hero Dying on Leander's Body*. He watched the progress of his ovation, received the congratulations of brother Artists and friends: himself content with his life's achievement,—himself, as well as others, enabled, for the first time, to grasp the collective result.

'The last time I saw Etty,' says his friend and admirer, Mr. Maclise, 'was sitting in the centre of 'his pictures in the Society of Arts' rooms. He con-'fessed some complacency in finding himself sur-'rounded by his Works, and receiving such friendly 'congratulations; but expressed his regret that 'some of his finest were not there; and said there 'were as many more as would fill a room.' While collecting and arranging them, Etty had fancied he had secured as many as there were 'good 'places for.' Now that the assembled hundred and thirty-three samples of his achievement won so much homage, and so much rejoiced his own eyes to see, he could not help wishing for *all* his best, and deploring the absence of such works as the *Toilet of Venus*, Mr. Spencer's *Magdalen*, the *Destroying*

Angels and the Temple of Vice, &c. In his *Autobiography* he had asserted, his Works, if assembled, 'would almost fill Westminster Hall:' little anticipating the assemblage which *was* immediately to succeed that declaration. The collection went into less space than Westminster Hall. The great room of the Society of Arts was filled, and a smaller one. That space sufficed, by reason of many omissions: many fine portraits, an innumerable series of studies, the masterpieces already mentioned; to which, among others, may be added those in the Vernon Gallery, the Diploma Picture, the *Circe*, the *Hesperus*.

The Exhibition at once established Etty's fame on a footing it had never before attained; and left his enduring claims no longer doubtful. For mere Fame, it did more than twenty years of silent labour had effected: anticipating the slow process of further years; raising him *at once* to the position, to which a wider knowledge of his works in their scattered condition, would gradually have preferred him. It extended a knowledge of the Poetic Colourist to those who had known little or nothing before; improved it among those who had known much. No man can carry in his head a well-digested *résumé* of a painter's works, such as a collective edition of them will present. All were seen in new relations and in a new light. Most were new acquaintances: save to those whose recollections stretched over the ephemeral Exhibitions of thirty years; and who had *not* amid the miscellaneous crowd overlooked these,—mistaken the counterfeit token for the golden coin.

Following close on the *Autobiography* which had

already diffused better notions of him, this memorable gathering lent a triumphal glow to the close of Etty's life. Just in time to do so it proved, by a happy chance. The last year of his life was the first in which he became truly known, beyond the confines of admiring *cliques*.

It is not every Painter who is calculated to show to so much advantage in an Exhibition whereof himself alone supplies the interest, as William Etty. Much went to it in his case:—nobility of purpose, great attainment, glory of Colour, breadth, variety of aim and of excellence, sustained power. Still, it is to be regretted, the pecuniary success of the Society's two Exhibitions,—of Mulready and Etty,—was not sufficient to encourage that body in continuing the admirable scheme it had planned. That the proceeds were not sufficiently large to forward the project of purchasing for our National Gallery examples of great living Painters, was no reason for discontinuing the Exhibitions themselves.

From these, profitable instruction resulted to the public, honour to the Painter,—and to the Society. For the increase of our knowledge of Art, of its Masters, and of their relative positions in the scale of attainment, it were to be wished the Works,—or a selection of them,—of every famous Painter, ancient or modern, might be periodically brought together. As great Living Artists are concerned, it were an act of justice, and fitting tribute. If, however, the scheme be again resumed, it would be indispensable for Exhibitions, wherein so much is risked, to take place in a detached and *fire-proof*

building: such as could be compassed, say, at the People's new 'Palace' at Sydenham.

Prince Albert, President of the Society of Arts, as such, 'paid the Exhibition a visit yesterday,' eagerly records Etty, (*June 15th*); 'and paid me a high com-'pliment from the chair,'—in reality, a somewhat faint one, a vague generality: a tribute, such as it was, difficult, under the circumstances, to have escaped rendering. By Royalty, Etty's Works were not visited. The Exhibition 'has made a great impres-'sion in my favour,' continues he (to Mrs. Bulmer). 'I wish *you*,' (who sat for it), 'could see the *uplifted* 'arm of *Judith*. It never looked so well before, or 'so striking. Then, there is that finest of my fine 'pictures,—*Hero Dying on Leander's Body*.

To human pleasures, something is ever a-wanting. Etty would fain have had all his friends witnesses of his Life's Achievement: a feeling, with which it is not hard to sympathize. 'I should have liked you 'to have seen' the Exhibition, is a wish more than once reiterated, to the same correspondent.

Though some were missing, who should have shared and swelled the Triumph, and themselves have reaped a share of profit and delight from the noble gathering,—an opportunity once missed, irrevocable; many there were, to feel duly inspirited by it, and to rejoice at the Painter's success:—'the re-'ward of patient, ceaseless toil,' affirms one very early friend (Albinus Martin). 'The sight,' continues the latter, 'of an Exhibition of your Pictures alone, and such an Exhibition, warmed me up; made me 'think of old times,—of poor Billy Jay, dirty

'gingerbread, the one glass of excellent Sherry, and 'endless number of cups of no less excellent tea.'

Throughout the continuance of the Exhibition, spontaneous expressions of admiration and gratitude greeted Etty, from stranger and friend. Fellow-Artists were not backward in such demonstrations: though among the more pedantic of the 'New 'School,' depreciatory whispers may have been heard. Speaking generally, the younger Artists were stimulated;—those of his own standing, roused into candid recognition. Among other instances, I may mention a Letter from Mr. Cockerell, the Architect,—of cordial congratulation, on the 'good 'fight' the Painter had fought: rejoicing in his achievements; frankly confessing how much he had been 'stirred by that splendid Exhibition,' and its display of 'beauty of thought, energy of purpose, 'and Colour.' 'Pleasure, pride, and elevating 'stimulus,' it had excited in him: such, as when a friend *has* aroused, he feels it doing that friend an 'injustice not to acknowledge.' Sir Charles Eastlake, writing some months later, of a 'Song of the 'Sirens,' Etty had had performed near his Picture, agreeing with him, that a union of the two Arts is often a help to each, and regretting he had not been able to see the Picture from the right distance, and hear the music at the same time; assures him, his Pictures were themselves music to him,—to his wife, no less so:—and that he was sorry when the Exhibition closed.

One of the last letters Etty ever received, contained a passing tribute to his noble poem of the

Sirens, from Robert Browning, himself a great, though unvalued Poet. His brief note indicates,—what will be no secret to readers of Mr. Browning's works,—that poets do occasionally understand Art, and praise in the right place. Few things are rarer than a poet's intelligent appreciation of a painter, and of the right painter.—I trust the writer will pardon my introducing his words: which I will do in this place, rather than later.

Bagni di Lucca, Sept. 21st, 1849.

'My dear Mr. Etty.—I was duly informed, by 'my Sister, of your very kind call of inquiry, at 'Hatcham. Yet, surely, you must have divined I 'could not be in England these three years past, 'or I should not have been so neglectful of my 'privilege, as to leave you unvisited so long. It 'was always too great a delight to me, when 'near your quarters, to knock at your door and 'convince myself that a great Painter and Poet 'could realize his conceptions, as exquisitely in 'London, at this latter day, as in Venice, when 'the Doges were there. I see noble pictures often 'now. But a noble Painter I do not hope to see, 'again, before I return to England; as I shall pro-'bably do next year: when it will be indeed an 'honour and a pleasure to shake his hand, instead 'of being forced to content myself, as at the pre-'sent, with saying simply, that

'I am, dear Mr. Etty,

'Yours very faithfully, as admiringly ever,

'Robert Browning.

'May I venture to send my wife's homage along 'with mine?—We have often remembered your grand 'Sirens.'

About the commencement of the Exhibition in the Adelphi, Etty received one of those applications to which he was so accustomed,—to authenticate a (supposed) Study of his,—but from an unusual quarter, a brother Artist. For miserable as are many of the pseudo 'Ettys,' copies have been executed of his genuine Studies, cleverly enough, to make it difficult for good judges to pronounce, at once.

'I was led,' Mr. Maclise writes, 'into the haunts 'of the Picture Dealers, some months ago, in search 'of my stolen Studies;—and in one of these dens, 'met with the accompanying, and purchased the 'same, to hang by me, as a little memorial and 'exemplar. I told this to Mr. Wethered. And in 'a day or two, Mr. Colls sent me a most disconcert-'ing original. But I have since heard, that you 'painted upon a Copy, and made it your own: and I 'try to believe this may be the one. Is it so?

'I was very near asking you, a short time since. 'But I felt you must be so often vexed by such ques-'tions, that I had not courage. It seemed somehow, 'easier to put the question on paper. Will you ex-'cuse it kindly, on this 8th of June, the Eve of the 'Triumph that awaits you to-morrow. * * I saw 'Macready yesterday, who is very well, *considering*.'

It was not till Etty had retained the Study for a day or two, and ascertained who had the original, that he could positively pronounce it a copy.

His labours for the Adelphi Exhibition concluded, the first excitement of the opening days over, Etty turns to account his restored leisure by painting on various studies and sketches; continues to paint, with occasional interruptions, during the remainder of his prolonged stay in London. He resumes, too, his familiar seat at the *Life*-School of the Academy, till the close of the summer session. At the School in Margaret Street, formerly in St. Martin's Lane, he attended one of the very last meetings previous to its final dissolution.

Amid the perilous excitements of London, he is often longing for 'the repose of the country.' London supplies almost too much to stir him.—'Your letters,'—writing (*July* 13*th*), to Mr. Spencer,—are always cheering to me. I think 'of quiet pastures, 'gentle streams:'—&c. * * 'In truth, as the 'hart panteth for the water-brook, so longeth my 'soul for the country.'—'I am trying to get the 'Sirens' song of old Homer set to sweet music. 'So buy some wax, and good strong cord to bind 'you to the mast!' The Painter arranged for a Band to play in an adjoining room to his Pictures, hoping to increase the effect of the latter by the influence of another Art. But as the business was managed, the result was not successful. As hinted in Sir Charles Eastlake's note, the music and the pictures could not be enjoyed simultaneously.

'*O le belle Arti!*' continues Etty, in a fine rapture, to his friend:—'*la Poesia! la Pittura! la Musica!* I 'love to linger in the cloistered shade, when in 'anthems clear the Cathedral service is mysteriously

'heard within, in solemn cadence! I love too the ex-'hilarating feeling which martial music gives:—the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance military, the tramp 'of horse and foot, the trumpet sounding under an 'archway, the flash of arms in sunshine, the pre-'cision of discipline which our fine Guards display. 'These I have enjoyed lately. * * What enjoy-'ments are open to us when our feelings are 'attuned either by health or happiness.

'* * Andrews has (yesterday) sold his *Britomart* 'to Lord Charles Townsend for 600 guineas. To-day 'will be the grand day at Christie's'—sale of Etty's friend Nicholson's pictures:—'and decide the fate of 'the dear *Graces*. The pictures sold tolerably well 'yesterday. But to-day is *the* Day! It was said last 'week, "Etty sells for more than Raphael!" The 'Lord Mayor gave a grand dinner last Saturday, in 'the style of a city whose merchants are princes,—to 'the Royal Academy and Royal Society:—Music, 'Turtle, Venison. A flourish of Trumpets announced 'the dinner and preceded the toasts.'

At the Adelphi, where Etty dropped in almost every day, hovering restlessly round his Works, the exultation of the first day was sustained. The self-vindication was complete at length. 'It is truly,' he open-heartedly writes, (*August 18th*), to his Brother Walter,—the witness of early reverses, and his rock of support for so long,—'truly a triumph, after a 'struggle of many years, to see and feel one's works 'duly estimated, considered, and applauded, in the 'very room' into which 'you took me, to admire the '*Orpheus* of Barry, and his other glorious works. *I*

'then, silently, but secretly, said within myself:—'*I* 'also will endeavour to rescue my country from the 'opprobrium of foreigners, who have said we can't 'produce an Historic painter; and endeavour to prove 'the country of Milton and Shakspeare is beyond 'their petty jealousies and malice.'

Anxiety and harass had not ceased with the successful opening of his Exhibition. *That* was no sooner brought to pass, than he became as anxious to see the Collection scattered again, as he had before been to form it. The burthen of responsibility as toward the several owners weighed heavily on his mind. And to the fever and fatigues of assembling his Works, succeeded the fever of apprehension for their safety. In proportion as he prized these products of his Hand,—the chief evidences of his genius and skill;—was his nervous dread of their utter loss by Fire. The Society's house in John-street, Adelphi, which had never before held so much treasure, was *not* fire-proof,—the reverse of fire-proof: forming part in an extensive block, itself situate in a crowded neighbourhood; one, from the number of shops and warehouses, especially exposed to danger, as Etty (a neighbour) had cause to know. Much was at stake:—the results of a laborious life. The chance, however remote, was not one to be calmly contemplated,—of their annihilation:—a few scattered remnants alone, perhaps, remaining of all he had painted, to remind the world that such an Artist had once existed. That chance haunted Etty's mind from the first day of triumph to the last: the anxiety pursuing him wherever he went. 'What a calamity it would be!' he would

despondingly exclaim: 'My fame killed!" It was the Damocles' sword at his festival. It was small consolation to the creator of so many radiant forms, risked in one venture,—and which had but one life,—to be obligingly assured 'they were all fully insured.'

A similar fear conspired, I believe, in the following year, to prevent Turner's compliance with the Society's overtures.

His health broken, in sore need of rest and quiet, rest impossible for him till his Works had reached their several destinations undamaged, he looked forward to the day of their dispersion as to one of release; one, which was to restore him to his Home, and to tranquillity. He eagerly urged the Managing Committee of the Council to an early close. But visitors, scanty during the first weeks, had multiplied. The earliest date which could be agreed to was the 25th of August.

A second earnest wish of the Painter's was complied with: that a proposed lowering of the rate of admission should *not* take place. Etty, mistrustful of the People, because ignorant of them, shared the prejudices of his class. Base and stupid prejudices, such as have prevailed in the Academy to defeat the efforts of Mr. Hume; who would have made that Institution admit to its Exhibitions the numerous body of industrious and intelligent men, who can afford threepence or sixpence for such a purpose, and gladly, but *not* a shilling: a fact the supercilious wealthy so little care to realize. There is in England always an eager multitude ready to pay a shilling for the sake of exclusiveness, and priority: so that the Academy is, in any case, safe on that side. In 1850, the Society of

Arts, during the concluding weeks of the Exhibition of 'Ancient and Mediæval Art,'—comprising articles of the choicest and most fragile nature, crowded into very close space,—opened its doors at threepence: with the happiest results. The same thing is prosperously done at the Edinburgh and Manchester Exhibitions. It was a 'gentleman' who broke the Portland Vase. It is *not* the artisan who pokes his cane or umbrella through obnoxious pictures: as a reference to the Police reports will prove.

Old friends, who noticed how greatly Etty was enfeebled by repeated attacks of his disease, trembled at every repeated attack of coughing. Asthma and rheumatism, in fact, render him little adequate to the 'anxious and harassing time' he has had to spend in London. On the very point of starting for a visit to his friend Bodley, at Cheltenham, he was,—early in August,—seized by a severe attack of rheumatic fever: making him 'entirely helpless,' and requiring 'the strongest medicines.'—'I could not,' he recounts, 'pull off my coat, open a door, or lift the 'glass of medicine to my mouth, without assistance.' 'Never more, if *so* ill,' he assures Mr. Bodley.—'Burnt 'up with fever and thirst, agonised with pain; I 'knew no rest night or day. But the strong reme-'dies'—for the time prove effectual. He now, (*August 11th*), 'feels something of himself once more;—and 'acknowledges with gratitude the goodness of 'Almighty God. * * The baleful and oppres-'sive influence of Sirius, or the Dog Star, hap-'pily ceases to-day! I am always glad when that's 'the case. Tell Martha, and the rest of the dear 'circle, I feel obliged by their kind interest about

'me.—The Adelphi Exhibition keeps open two weeks 'after to-day.—The visitors increase.'

'Bless God! tranquillity—and hope of getting 'home—is coming! with healing on its wings,' is his exclamation, (*August* 18*th*), to his Brother. The superintendence of the packing and removal, was taken off his hands by Mr. Wass. But the Painter still hovered about the Adelphi. At length the day of the Exhibition's close, and of release from anxiety actually came. But on the morning of clearing away, as he stood in the midst of his Works, Etty was in tears. The grand Whole was to be dispersed again, and for ever: and he was bidding his assembled favourites a last adieu.

Of 'the *Robinson Crusoe, Hero and Leander*, and 'a few of the most precious,' he himself took paternal charge: 'for safety and for succour, lodged 'them here;' he reports from Buckingham Street, to 'Mr. Andrews. 'I have been,' he continues (*September* 5*th*), 'to Oxford, for a few days; as a change 'for me and Miss Etty:' who had been 'rather 'anxiously fearful of the prevailing epidemic.'—It was a year of Cholera. 'Returned last night, in order 'to prepare for my York journey.'

His grand Exhibition closed, and 'all the great 'and small Works returned, unharmed, to their re-'spective owners,'—Etty, after 'an arduous five months' campaign, quitted London,—finally, as it proved: himself, contemplating however, a return to London in the Spring. At the last sitting of a new Model who had pleased him,—from whom, and from some others, he had continued to paint till within a day or two of his leaving London,—he told her to be

in readiness 'when he came back:'—'he *never came*,' added the Model, who retailed his words.—'I think it 'will give you some little pleasure,' the Painter tells 'Mr. Bodley, that 'I have not given up possession 'of my London Chambers, as yet; but have left my 'Painting-room in *statu quo*. So that when I return, 'I can have a fire lit, boil the kettle; mix the colours 'and paint at once.'—'I like to feel,' he wrote, but a fortnight before death, to Mr. Wethered, 'I can 'come up in a few hours, and work in my old shop 'and old corner. There is no place like London.'

Late on the evening of Saturday, *September 29th*, Etty reached Coney Street, with his 'ten or dozen 'packages' of Pictures, &c.: rejoicing to 'sit down' in his 'quiet home,' after 'labours long, and deep 'anxieties, mixed with blessings.' The aspirations of youth, and resolves of manhood had been fulfilled. He no longer looked on himself as a labourer in Art; yet thought to do a good deal in a quiet way: in his York Home,—the house he had purchased and fitted up with such happy anticipations; where he had arranged his Study-light, and surrounded himself with all those Art-objects so familiar to former friends and visitors in Buckingham Street.

Happy, and in even gay spirits, after the fever of London, to be at peace in the 'Home of his Heart,' —'a City hallowed by sacred and solemn recollec- 'tions:' he now takes his ease, and—very soon, his brush. Again he is to be seen, with bowed head and feeble step, sauntering through York Streets with his Niece; looking very ill, and suffering so much from oppression of breath, as to be scarce able to speak. He

totters up the Minster steps, hovers round old familiar spots: dropping in, as before, on old acquaintance among the tradesmen, for a chair whereon to rest,—remarking apologetically, that he 'is 'rather the 'worse for wear;'—to rest and find his breath. A few paces, or a single flight of stairs, sufficed now to rob him of it. Gossip freely he would, as was his way, and with the humblest, when breath to gossip came. His sufferings seemed to many, in these years, 'to have increased the natural benevolence of 'his temper.' His manner had become even gentler and kinder,—his accessibility greater. To the School of Design, he pays a visit, arriving too exhausted to whisper more than, 'I shall be better by-and-bye,'—after resuming his usual seat on a drawing stool:—leaning against the desk, for half an hour, till easier moments came. Then, he takes notice of a favourite female scholar:—promising further advice 'if she will 'some day call on him.'

The Triumph at the Adelphi,—the last and greatest of Etty's life,—with its attendant excitement, physical fatigues, mental anxieties and fears, undoubtedly contributed to hasten his death. On his return to York, he appeared 'much altered' to all; to have visibly lost strength:—his frame enfeebled by his last attack; he looking already the old man, though only in his sixty-third year. Friends who observe the thin, wasted form, and feel his arm ominously 'give' in the hand that shakes his, in their own minds pronounce him 'not long for this world.' He himself bates no jot of courage; still hopes 'progress.' The 'chronic 'rheumatism remains,' indeed, 'in his hands,' &c.: but

he has much more command of them than he had. And his 'general health' mends.

'A little neater penmanship,' he cheerfully writes, to Mr. Bodley, (*Oct. 5th*), 'may characterize this to 'you, than my two last:' (from his sick-room in Lon- 'don). These wintry feels in the weather give me an 'asthmatic spasm now and then. But I am thankful 'I am no worse;—when death and disease have been 'so fearfully busy around us.'

On his friend Wethered, he lays a few little commissions. * *. 'Pray call, the first oppor- 'tunity, at the Royal Academy. Inquire for Mr. 'Vaughan, clerk; and deposit in his hands a sovereign 'on my account, to enable him to forward me my 'letters, &c.'—'Further, at your leisure, call at 'the Society of Arts: they will give you the address 'of ——, the Artist. If it is in your beat at all, call 'on him, and give him half a sovereign, for one or 'two copies of a little Boy's "Drawing Book," of boats, '&c., he showed me in Town. I was busily engaged, 'and, I fear, rather short with him. He seems 'hardish up: and I don't like to be unkind to an old 'fellow-Student.'

October 7th, he reports himself to the same friend, 'happy as a prince,—nay, happier. Betsey and I 'toddle about:—yesterday, had a delightful walk. 'And both wished you were with us. Within five 'minutes' walk of our house, are the grounds of the 'Museum: where, a band of military music was 'playing soft airs,—the air balmy, the sky serene. 'Relics of the ancient times'—'of Old Rome, and 'the glorious Minster, were the background. A

'river rolled in front;—trees gracefully waving, tinged 'with hues autumnal.'

Another letter, (*October 9th*), is to Mrs. Bulmer. * * 'In the midst of sickness and suffering, a world that 'seems truly the valley of the shadow of death, one 'catches at the recollection of old times and old 'friendships, as one of the only bits of sunshine left. '—Passing your' (former) 'house the other day, we 'looked up: but no one was trimming the garden!'— 'Your portrait is opposite me, and my dear Mother's 'and Father's. And we' lately 'turned over amongst 'some papers, my "Farewell to York," written at your 'house, in 1835, I think. We have been this morn- 'ing to the Plantations, to arrange a place for *John 'the Baptist*,—"Repent ye, for the Kingdom of 'Heaven is at hand." We went to Acomb, to Mr. 'Smith's; and to my old friend the Miller: who '*would* put in the cab a basket of nice apples, ac- 'cording to custom.'

As long as physical strength to hold the pencil remained, Etty's love of his Art would never have allowed him to relinquish it. To his doctors, it had for months been a mystery how he contrived to paint. The rheumatic swelling of his hands prevented his holding a brush with any firmness. Yet, despite asthma, gout, and the rest, the fire of the man held out to the last. To those admitted within his Studio, it was not a little 'strange' to see him: giving a dab or two with the end of his brush,—retiring, putting his head in squares, and pondering over the effect wanted; strange, too, to watch how much

effect *was* produced, by a few strokes from that gouty hand.

The state of Etty's Studio, in this month of October, 1849, witnessed to the habits of perseverance still his inseparable companions. Among various pictures in course of execution, one,—commenced in this month,—was a Study of a Ringed Pheasant and Grapes; rich and harmonious in Colour, vigorous in *character*, so to speak, as any he had painted. The Picture was never finished. A white space within a pencil outline, occupying a third of the intended group, tells it own story significantly enough. There, too, stood the large canvas 12½ ft. by 7¼ ft., for that which he proposed, as his last Historic essay, the *Bridal Procession*, from Homer.

October 23rd, writing to Mr. Wethered, he omits not his customary reminiscence: how, 'this day, 'in the year 1798, he was bound in fetters for 'seven years, and apprenticed to a Printer.' Towards the latter part of October, he is visited by 'two or 'three sharp attacks' from 'his old enemies,—short 'breathing, rheumatism, and helplessness: last, not 'least, a most distressing and painful malady,—'an 'attack of gravel.' But, thank God! its bitterness 'is,' (*October 26th*), 'subduced a little. * * Good 'heavens! what poor creatures we are, when the 'hand of disease and affliction is on us.'

'Very ill,—in much suffering,' he still relinquishes not the 'hope, ere long, brighter days will 'shine.'—'I am better, my dear boy,' he assures Mr. Wethered, (*October 30th*). 'So don't be down-'hearted! By-and-bye, I hope to be better still.

'My complaint is a painful one. Yet am I mercifully dealt with; and I hope turning the corner toward a better state of things. I have been able to get a walk to-day.'

After a short confinement to the house, he was always to be seen in York Streets again. One of the last walks he ever took,—when, in fact, he could scarcely find breath or strength to walk at all,—was directed by his kindly heart: to make inquiries of a working man, as to the character of one his servant was about to marry. If, as he had feared, he should not prove a good character, the Painter had determined to break off the connection. A faithful and valued servant, who had been in his service some years, 'should not,' he was resolute, 'throw herself away.'

Lists of friends, old and familiar, he had made for a series of parties, to be given the coming Winter. The tragic close which awaits every life, interrupted this, as many other kind and friendly schemes.

An imprudence more serious than ordinary it was, which cost the Painter his Life:—was, at all events, the immediate cause of shortening it. A young man in the prime of life, was prone, despite cautions from Miss Etty, to extol in Etty's presence, as *the* specific for health and longevity, the bracing system, on which *he* throve: of wearing no flannels, bathing in cold water, &c. The Artist, in the decline of life and decay of his vital powers,—the victim of half a dozen different maladies,—must needs try some of these inviting remedies; commencing the experiment

on himself, by leaving off the flannel shirt in which he was accustomed to sleep. This he did, on the night of November 2nd, unknown to his watchful nurse,—and despite her urgent dissuasions; on whom he practised a little artifice, to effect his purpose: to the last, above all things, fond of having his own way. Having threatened to deceive her, he did so, by slipping the flannel under the bed; triumphantly informing her, next morning, that he '*had* cheated her:' whereat, she justly feared he had cheated *himself*.

Unusually well and cheerful that day, (Sunday), he went to afternoon Service, at the Minster: in the evening, felt much better. And a conversation with his Apothecary made him '*quite happy*;' dispelling a 'bugbear which had haunted him for years.' To these sanguine hopes succeeeded, in the night, one of his customary attacks: difficulty of breathing, and troublesome cough, 'connected with congestion of the lungs,'—reports one of his medical attendants. An attack, which,—till the end drew nigh,—few suspected would prove his last. Little more than a week previous to his death, he had been seen about York. To his York friends therefore, accustomed to hear of his being laid up so often, and to whom his last brief illness was scarcely known till it was over, the inevitable sequel came as a surprise: as it was felt, by the lovers of Art everywhere.

November 5*th*, Etty scribbled a short note to Mr. Wethered, telling him he was 'better.'—'Let 'me hear of your welfare. It rejoices my heart.' On the 6*th*, another, to his Brother Walter, reports

him 'convalescent,' and 'right glad to see your 'dear hand-writing:'—speedily branching off into further domestic details. Both days he had got to his Painting-room. On the evening of the 6th, he was worse; the next day confined to his bed-room: a room opening from the Studio, and looking out on the river Ouse. Thither,—for he died in harness,—he had his large canvas of the *Grecian Bridal* brought. Sitting in a chair during the first few days of his illness, and proceeding with his Sketch, until he became too feeble; he, after that, contented himself with having the canvas before him, and dreaming of the intended picture.

The Sketch, though slight, was as beautiful, as far as it went, as if it had been dashed in when the Painter's hand was at its strongest. The lights laid in, in white chalk, the figures in black charcoal; the whole had been done off at a few strokes: a series of bold and graceful, curvilinear ones. The musicians go before the Bride; two maids at her side. Other figures follow. The conception of the Picture was, doubtless, in Etty's mind almost complete. It is an instance of stupid indifference to the vestiges of a great Artist, that this interesting memorial of the Painter's last days,—a characteristic suggestion of a poetic Picture, life alone had been wanting to realize,—sold at Etty's sale, (to a young Artist), for the mere value of the canvas (£2 15*s.*): *as a canvas*, the owner intending, (when I saw it), to make use of it. The Sketch itself had, by removals, been nearly effaced.

To the attack on his lungs was afterwards superadded a slight one of rheumatic gout, in

the wrists and elbows: 'from the general feebleness of his frame, not fully developed,' reports my medical authority. Not till the Saturday did he submit to be wholly prisoner to his bed. He continued cheerful. 'I have just parted with my 'Medico, Dr. Simpson; here comes my Divine,' he exclaimed, on the entrance of his friend, Mr. Spencer. He became conscious he was dying. 'I 'don't know!' exclaimed he, to his physician, after the usual inquiries and replies: 'but I never felt so in all my life!—never! *never!*' To his female servant, he spake of death as 'a great mystery:' 'wonderful! 'wonderful! this death!' Through his window, commanding the River, and an extensive horizon, a glimpse was caught of the sun setting, blood-red, in beauty and majesty, as he had so often seen, and was no more to see it. The familiar sight, so soon to be unfamiliar, smote at the heart of the impressionable Artist: suggesting much on Earth to which he was bound by closest ties,—all he was formed so vividly to apprehend and enjoy; which was now, for him, to pass away. Death was hard to understand: and for a Painter, whose whole life's happiness and occupation have been drawn from visible Nature,—as for all who have tasted life fully and vividly, to whom the *capabilities* of life are great,—hard, perhaps, to reconcile himself to. Still serene, however, he consoled the servant by telling her:—'You will have me 'there;' pointing to his Portrait.

A quarter before eight on the evening of the 13th of November, Etty,—conscious almost to the last,—had ceased to breathe. The inspired hand lay stiff

in death. He died in his sixty-third year: after an illness of ten days; little more than six weeks after his return to his beloved York home. 'Congestion of 'the lungs' the proximate cause of death.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUPPLEMENTARY.

Public Funeral—A Cherished Wish—Unfulfilled—In St. Mary's Abbey—Hero-Worship—A Sordid Topic—Self-righteous Judges—No Monument in York—Homage Elsewhere—Fate of the Studies—A Protest.

ETTY was buried on the 23*rd* (*November*). The Funeral was a public one: Mayor and Corporation, and the School of Design, joining with relatives and friends in following York's most memorable man to his grave. The shops were shut;—the streets filled. From the Royal Academy, to which his name had been so signal an honour, no mark of respect was forthcoming. Such tokens are not 'usual' towards its great men. It is in the habit of honouring only Itself; in the person of its President,—whether a Reynolds—or a West.

It had always been Etty's wish that his remains should rest within the confines of his beloved Minster. That sequel to his life had become an habitual allusion with him. He had sometimes contemplated a 'monument, *à la* Rubens:'—a Picture from his own hand.—'Lay me,' he had written once when 'convalescent in a sick-room,' to his friend Mr. John Bulmer, as a memorial of his wishes:—'lay me by 'my Bride; she who is so lovely to mine eyes, so dear 'to my heart, captivating to my imagination; whose 'Brow is bound round with rubies, with sapphires,

'with amethysts, with emeralds; who lifts her head 'into the heavens, and seems a fitting ante-chamber 'thereto. To drop metaphoric flights,—it is difficult 'for me to speak coldly on the subject,—lay me near 'the Choir of the Minster, in, or as near to, the little 'south Transept, (which is near the flight of steps to 'the altar), as is possible. My desire to be buried in 'the Minster of York is not, I am desirous to be-'lieve, from ostentation: but from the true love I 'bear that holy, that glorious work, that splendid 'monument of the piety and power of the Past Ages; 'when the House of God was thought worthy of all 'the perfection that man could give it.'

But York Minster boasts no 'Poets' Corner.' The sanctuary reserved for Archbishops, Residentiaries, and the like ephemeral persons, is unavailable for Genius; unless it disburse some £500 in fees, as a peace-offering to the harpies which infest such places: 'so much for opening the ground;' 'so much 'for digging grave;' so much for tablet room; so much for &c. No provision was found in Etty's Will for expending that sum. No idea seems to have been entertained by the Authorities or the Town of waiving such provision; and burying their great Painter in York's famous Church, of their own accord: as a fitting honour to the man, and graceful fulfilment of his known wish. A lasting discredit to York, this stolid and mercenary indifference to the cherished desires of the Painter who had effected so much for the honour of his native city; and for whom *it* had done simply nothing.

A place beside his Father and Mother, in Pave-

ment Churchyard, would, as the Church stands in the centre of York, have contravened the new and very requisite, sanatory regulations of the City. The vicinity of a spot next dearest, (to Etty), to the Minster,—St. Mary's Abbey, was ultimately chosen: a quiet corner of the adjoining Churchyard of St. Olave's, within the shadow (almost) of a mouldering arch of that once beautiful Church. Before a bricked-up doorway of the ruined fabric, on the other side of which door stretch now the Museum Gardens, stands Etty's Tomb,—a large erection. A tranquil, if somewhat dark and gloomy place: objects beautiful, and once dear to Etty, near. In digging the grave, (a deep one), the relics of three several eras, as Professor Phillips informs me, were dug through: a modern layer, a Mediæval, a Roman. Etty's is, in fact, a Roman grave. A small earthenware vase, now in the possession of Professor Phillips, was found in it.

To the same quiet spot, Etty's Brother Walter, at the time of the Painter's death too ill to leave home, was also borne, little more than three months after, (*February 23rd,* 1850): at the age of seventy-six. Within a year, the Painter's old friend, Mr. Brook,—who had selected the site of Etty's grave,—was, according to his own wish, laid near; next a buttress of St. Mary's.

After death, a cast had been taken of the Painter's head, unpleasing and untruthful: as all *post-mortem* casts, it has been justly observed, must be. The expression altered, the muscles of the face rigid; it necessarily represents *death*,—not life. A bust of

little likeness or merit, by an 'idealizing' Sculptor, whose aim was 'not so much a likeness, but a work 'of Art,' was made (in Plaster), to meet the demand anticipated from the Painter's fellow-citizens. A monument was talked of. The bust 'did not sell.' The monument never advanced beyond talk.

One of the chief employments and recreations of a village or country town, is the settlement of other people's business,—each one for his neighbour: intermeddling and pronouncing definitive sentence on matters as to which all are inevitably ignorant. Notwithstanding Etty's blameless life and lovable character, the known kindness of his heart,—all who knew him, thinking and speaking only good of him,—despite the honour his name reflected on York, and the love he himself bore it; a coldness towards his memory has since his death prevailed in that infatuated City: one never eagerly bestirring itself to honour him in life, preferring rather to worship mud idols like its Railway King,—also a York 'Worthy.'

The alleged pretext for this local feeling, as it is one injurious to Etty's good name,—a possession which in life he prized so highly,—must lead me to trespass on ground intrinsically private: topics whereof, however, the York public has already constituted itself judge—without appeal; on which, absurdly disproportionate stress has been laid.

Etty left behind him a Will, since the making of which, in September, 1845, and of its Codicil, in September of the year following, (on the purchase of his House), a large portion of the property remaining at his death had been accumulated.

To his Niece, who had risen from a humble position in life, to be his valued companion, and 'Right 'Hand,' an annuity was bequeathed of £200, with the house in York for her life: of which latter bequest it is even possible Etty, in his childlike innocence of business and of law, may have entertained confused notions, as including a life-interest in its *contents* also. He never seemed to anticipate any other sequel, than her continuing to live in his loved Home, and *its* remaining as he had with so much care and delight, arranged it. 'This house is 'my Castle,' he would say: 'keep it as such!—keep 'these Studies around you as long as you live.'

The whole of his remaining property was conferred on his Brother Walter,—his sympathizer and friend through life, his stay in the lonely years of poverty and obscurity; and who passed in Etty's eyes as, even more than himself, the architect of his fortunes. To whom, he never ceased to consider the money he might make, as of right belonging,—next to himself; and to whom, (I may be allowed to add), the addition of income was, on his family's account, and from other causes, of serious moment. The gold lace business,—some years since relinquished,—had not ultimately proved so reliable an investment as the Artist's Studio:—which once had looked so questionable a venture.

The general herd, prone to forget the ladder which has helped them, would little understand how much this disposal of his property was a matter of sentiment with Etty,—the result of a sense of justice. The debt he owed his Brother, for whom affection never slack-

ened,—the Brother who had enabled him to be a Painter, and to continue one,—was not one which in his eyes could be satisfied by mere repayment, with interest, of moneys lent. For nearly ten years, the periodic supplies his Brother had been accustomed to receive from him had ceased. He and his family were to receive them in another and, (by careful husbandry), much improved form. It is plain, I think, Etty, in the main, never meant anything else: from the moment he had achieved *more* than the competence to which his Niece was entitled. And from what he once thought right, nothing could ever deter Etty,—no 'fear of public opinion,' or other fear; as the tenor of his career in Art abundantly exemplifies.

The Will was too short and simple an one to please many. It is always difficult for a bachelor to make an irreproachable last testament. It is well when the natural claims of wife and children cut the knot. Etty was particularly ill qualified successfully to achieve, (unassisted), any business act. The numerous humbler members of his family, with their various expectations; from whom help had not in his life been withheld, but whom he had ever been averse to making dependents, or lifting (as he would call it) out of their position; naturally discovered omissions. Unwilling, he had evidently been, to wander from the broad and simple disposition of his property which squared with his Sentiment, always a vehement guide with Etty, or to lessen the gross sum—not the immeasurable one it to some seemed, one that might quickly have been dissipated ere every expectant had been satisfied,—the substantial, though

not vast sum which was to put his elder Brother's family in easier worldly circumstance. It is probable too, he in his own mind vaguely deputed, —what ought never to be deputed,—the care of some who had claims on him, to this Brother, a kind and liberal man, whose death swiftly followed his own; and that he reckoned as provision for his Niece's family, that made for *her*. Less sympathy is due to those not related to him, with whom kindnesses already received, were the ground for resenting the omission of posthumous ones; or who, indebted to him for pictures far outweighing in value any services rendered, may have been disappointed in their expectation of further additions to their collections from his hand.

A prejudice inveterate in many old-fashioned persons had long prevented Etty's making a Will at all; —certainly stood in the way of a third, modified according to the increased resources of the last few years of his life. During his last illness, time, inclination, and the counsel of friends, were wanting to the embodiment of his latest wishes. No directions were left in favour of those as to whom he was well known to have entertained kind intentions; nor even in regard to his Pictures and Studies: as to the fate of which he must have had decided wishes,—had he but faced the matter. Men of his stamp seldom do face such questions. The tacit understanding stands for the express, and the wish for the deed.

It was thus, as often happens with the last act, or omission of a man's life, Etty's Will gained him, for the time, the reverse of golden opinions among many

personally interested in it. But the York people mistook their duty, when taking on themselves to sit in judgment on private affairs; of the *pros* and *cons* of which they knew nothing: deciding for a man how he should or should not make his will. Whatever were or were not its mistakes, he had committed no crime, nor any act to justify the 'scandal and the 'cry' it aroused in his native town. The whole of that local wonderment, that base and contemptible talk, is a sample of the pharasaic, unwarrantable meddlesomeness which results from idleness and vacuity. That an unexpected disposition of his property should, despite the notorious virtues and merits of the man in life, have given such 'great offence,' as entirely to change the current of feeling towards his memory; have shut out every construction of that act but the most unfavourable, and have obscured all other memorabilia of the man; betrays a method of judgment incredibly narrow and stupid. The 'coarse black and white' of such a 'world' (of busybodies), forms a truly valuable portrait! The moral and mental atmosphere of these provincial towns needs purifying.

It is easy to be wise or liberal at another's expense. These self-righteous judges were not only scandalized at the criminality of Etty's too brief Will;—but, being a thrifty people, found occasion in it for not opening their own pockets: for not buying his bust, or erecting a monument to his memory;—the more especially as he had not left them the money to do it with. An exceptionable last testa-

ment outbalanced all other claims,—excused them from the disagreeable necessity of rendering honour, for once,—where due.

The absence of a pretentious modern 'Gothic altar 'tomb' to the Painter's memory, encumbering the aisles of York Minster, will not grieve the lover of Gothic art. The presence, in a public building or gallery, of some of Etty's noblest works would prove his best monument, and the most creditable to York. It is a phenomenon peculiarly modern, indicative of torpid local life and intelligence, of the domination of a benumbing, centralizing spirit: that this City, possessing, as it did, the capability of retaining an enduring interest,—nay, of becoming a very shrine of Art,—in its once abundant remains of Antiquity, and in having given birth to one of the greatest Painters England has produced,—one, too, singularly devoted in heart to his birth-place;—that it should have so far thrown these opportunities away, as to have demolished, within the last thirty years, or modernized, half its antiquities,—its credentials to our respect, in the absence of *other* claims;—and have absolutely nothing to show the stranger, that such a Painter as William Etty ever existed.

It is not among York citizens we must look for enthusiasm towards their great Painter, but among men of more equal (intrinsic) rank. Better tribute than any within *their* gift was promptly paid his memory by another Master in the Art, a rarely though dissimilarly endowed one. In the March following Etty's death, his fellow-Academician, once fellow-Student, Mr. Leslie, then Professor of Painting,

devoted one of the Lectures delivered in virtue of his office, to a genial and appreciative recognition of the genius of his late compeer:—a graceful act. One, whom he could recollect having been esteemed a 'worthy plodding person' with no chance of becoming 'a good Painter,' was now loyally acknowledged to rank among the great names in Art.

Pilgrimages to York, Etty's birth-place and resting-place, have already been made for his sake. Another fellow-Artist not unknown to Fame, Mr. Maclise, on his way to Scotland in the Autumn of 1851, made a two days' halt in York: religiously seeking, among the things of note in the time-honoured City, all memorials of Etty; nor concealing his enthusiasm for his late friend. Under the willing guidance of Mr. Sunter, the bookseller, he visited the Minster, the Bars, and other Antiquities, so well loved by the great Colourist; the house of Etty's birth, and that of his retirement and death; his tomb beside St. Mary's Abbey; and the School of Design in the Cathedral's immediate precincts, he had established: there finding many of his Studies (in crayon),—the gift of his Brother Walter,—hung up for the use of the pupils. 'Homage to Etty!' Mr. Maclise inscribed after his own name, in the Visitors' book. Genuine Studies from Etty's hand were also fallen in with elsewhere, to the beginnings of some of which he had himself been privy. And one of a female figure,—painted on, like so many others, on both sides, he purchased. 'Mr. Sunter was most kind to me,' mentions Mr. Maclise; 'and took an interest in my interest.' To that gentleman, I also can do no less than tender my

acknowledgments for time cheerfully sacrificed, and local information abundantly communicated, when I was in York at the same time as Mr. Maclise, for a much longer visit: assistance which has proved materially useful to the present enterprise.

Etty left behind him, as the proceeds of his Art, besides his house in York, some £17,000 in the funds: the accumulation of the last eight years, the larger portion realized within the last three or four. The sale of his much-prized Studies, Copies, and of his unfinished Pictures, in the following May, realized a further £5000: a much smaller sum than would have been obtained had they not been all thrown on the market at once. In the absence of the testator's directions, the executors found no other course open to them: one, however, much to be deplored, as the Works themselves are concerned. A collection of Studies from Nature was scattered at random,—into any but suitable hands often;—which, judiciously allotted, would have been valuable as example to every town in the kingdom where Painting is cared for: to every School of Art, to every Artist, every cultivated lover of Art. The market being glutted, and the value depreciated, the Dealers, to make them the more saleable, were unhappily tempted to have many of these Studies doctored,—'finished' by other hands, or worked up into set pictures:—in other words, to destroy them. The value of such works was, as genuine Studies from Nature by one rarely qualified. No man can happily complete another artist's work. Least of all does the glowing flesh and blood of a great Colourist allow of admixture

with the coarse clay or superfine wax-work of ordinary painters of the nude. Even the landscape of a Linnell is beside the mark as the proxy of one of Etty's grandly conceived, grandly coloured backgrounds:—backgrounds alone suiting, in sentiment or colour, the sunlight of his figures. The original harmony is jarred, the picture blocked up. In the simple study we had an authentic fragment; in the unfinished picture an eloquent indication, harmonious and self-consistent.

Many of the Studies have fallen into hands still less scrupulous and intelligent; have been painted over by inferior men, and hopelessly ruined: a sacrilege unhappily, beyond the reach of law.

Let me counsel all possessors of Etty's Studies to preserve them with a jealous care. Their like will not quickly be produced again. The Promethean art to fix *such* shadows of Nature is not an every-day acquirement or endowment. Even commercially speaking, a little care is worth while. In time, an authentic, unspoiled Study of Etty's will come to double its pecuniary value. To the discerning in such matters, already, its worth is not to be approximated by any pecuniary scale. For money avails nothing to command such products. The demand is *not* necessarily followed by the supply, in Art, in Literature. The hand once stiff in death, which painted the *Fleur de Lis*,—the eye closed which saw with the understanding, these 'Academy Studies,' as they are called, witness,—the fabled treasures of the East will not secure their parallel.

CHAPTER XXX.

RETROSPECT.

A Productive Life—Its Purport Noble—Etty's Art: Range of Subject—Based on the Perennial—Short-comings—Devotion to the Nude—Current Misconceptions of the Man—Pure Motives—The Question of Morality: Mr. Leslie—The Works Innocent—Orthodox Notions of the Human Form—Art's Privilege—Conventional Propriety—Why Shocked—An Artist's Faith—The Native Gift—The Question of Taste.

'My life has been,'—averred Etty, in his *Autobiography*, taking a summary and characteristic backward glance at it,—'since I was free from bondage, and 'pursuing the retreating phantom of Fame, (like the 'boy running after the rainbow): my life has been, I 'say, with the exception of some dark thunder-clouds 'of sorrow, disappointment, and deprivation, one long 'summer's day, spent in exertions to excel, struggles 'with difficulty,—sometimes Herculean exertions, 'both of mind and body; mixed with poetic day-'dreams, and reveries by imaginary enchanted 'streams. I have passed sweetly and pleasantly 'along, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies; 'and regretting my inability to do greater and better 'things.'—One 'long Summer's day,'—his own Life seemed to the suffering, invalided, but happy-natured Painter: happy in his Art, happy in Nature, happy in his Artist's temperament,—sensitive, enjoying, vivid; happy in his sincerity and singleness of heart; in his unforced, freely flowing piety of

feeling; in his unworldliness. The Summer's day however, had been no holiday but a working one: spent in 'exertions to excel,' in 'struggles with dif-'ficulty,' in victorious achievement. A happy life it had been, because a productive and pure. It was not *all* sunshine and ease, no obvious triumph at the moment. Much of it was passed in obscurity, much amid uncertainties, not a few, as to the ultimate worldly result. 'But he lived,' says Mr. Leslie, 'to enjoy the reward of his genius and his virtues, 'even in this life.' The reward was not a money reward, nor one of empty rumour: though money and fame came at last.

'There was here little of a Life to tell,' persons of a certain mental conformation confusedly mutter: the Painter 'was nothing out of his Art.' In fact, Etty was no Admirable Crichton, no conspicuous figure at an evening party. His life was one of achievement not of 'eloquent talk.' It is well with any man, and with his biographer too, when he has been something *in* his art or craft, or special part in the general drama of life. Life is short; and allows small time or opportunity for its leading actors to effect much between the scenes. Etty's Art might well be enough for him, followed as he followed it.

Only for two reasons can any Life be really memorable; for the results achieved, results whereof others than the sower reap,—a test at once winnowing the few from the many;—or, for the spirit in which it was fulfilled. In neither of these aspects was Etty's life wanting. As to results: in *them* it

was fruitful. He left the world richer than he found it: as it is ever the noble privilege of genius to do in the transcendent degree,—to be the world's benefactor. A thing it is in the power of all to do and be, more or less, who *will* it: in the power of every *bonâ-fide* worker or producer, from the true ruler of men down to the true tiller,—fertilizer of acres. How much richer *he* left the world, his Works themselves declare; and for some generations will, I fancy, continue to declare,—to those whose eyes are open to Nature as translated by Art: a body which does not comprise every citizen, not all the wise, nor all the gifted even. Those who have not the comparatively rare, æsthetic faculty or impressionability,—openness to Art's language and influences,—a sensibility born in men, or, not born, improved by culture or stultified by mis-culture:—such persons, specious talk of mine about the Pictures will not convince to any purpose, will little mend matters fundamentally.

That the spirit and purport of Etty's life was noble,—a matter cognizable by a less special jury than the last,—was resolute, steadfast, loyal,—to the highest in himself, and in Nature so far as he could divine her meaning,—I think the readers of the foregoing pages will answer affirmatively. No touch of baseness,—even approximate,—have I been able to descry in Etty: a thing we can say of few men, 'distinguished,' or the reverse. Only his opinions were hearsay. His character and his life were real,—not a tissue of 'appearances,' and slavish compliances, but independent, self-subsistent. Giant energy, devotion to unworldly aims: these qualities are of themselves

grand; of themselves characterize a man other than vulgar. The force and purity of character, the indifference to the Day and all its ephemeral interests, were matched by devotion to beauty equally rare. 'I have never known, writes Mr. Cockerell, 'any 'Artist, excepting always the immortal Flaxman, alto-'gether so devout and pious in adoration of beauty, 'for its spirituality.' Much was, for its sake, left on one side by Etty: the world and its frivolities,—its engrossing emptiness, its factitious 'duties,' and actual baseness; as in an abrupter, more self-isolating spirit, but a noble one, by Turner. The inheritance of these two lay elsewhere; in a finer world. And *we* reap the fruit of their constancy and high resolves.

A noble life surely, in its silent way, this of Etty's; invincible by vice or sloth: a victorious life. Such are the lives alone worthy of heed, alone (unless for inverse reasons), worthy the record; or cheering to witness, Of such a kind, every honest man would wish his own to be, in his own province of affairs, more or less humbly.

In the spirit of his life, in the informing spirit of his Art, Etty was a model for all Artists: not so, as to the special range of subject, which in his particular case so well sufficed as the imperfect means to noble ends. The gifted talker about Art of our day,—possessed for the moment by one idea, which, though a very good one, may become very false, when excluding all other ideas,—has been guilty of mourning hysterically over Etty as a 'lost mind:' because he did not paint subjects of his own time,—did not, &c. Now though it be true, that as the crowd

of Artists, of clever, even of gifted Artists, is concerned, there is no more purposeless, valueless inanity, than what they perpetrate, in the endeavour to follow the 'Grand Schools;' no more imbecile or noxious teaching than the Academic one, which misleads them into such ineffectual endeavours: yet one formula does not settle the whole difficult question. *Their* guiding star is not necessarily that of sovereign genius. Every rule has its exceptions. The Greatest triumph over, and subdue to their own purpose, conditions which are fatal to lesser men. The strong man freely wields the sword, under whose weight the stripling sinks. Etty stands by himself, without Masters, (of his own day), without pupils,—an exceptional case, a successful anachronism: a man such as appears once in two or three hundred years. He threw life into the old forms, others are so helpless to inform with relevance. The very child-likeness of his character, and his simplicity of heart, enabled him to feel anew the elsewhere stale, overworn fables, with a freshness acuter minds may well despair of. He was in earnest about them; took them to heart, as the medium for conveying his perceptions of Nature and of beauty. While fables were often the texts, it was Nature, reality, he copied: as faithfully and humbly as our Landscape painters themselves, and far more honestly than many of our painters of Domestic. Flaxman's fine spirit encumbered itself far more, and Stothard's also, with the pedantry of classicism, and with the mannerism, than did Etty.

'No one told him what to paint,' laments Mr. Ruskin.' No! truly original genius is not in the habit of

being told, (to any purpose), by others, what to do. The very genius consists in seeing for itself what to do. Few men would have been less at home in 'subjects 'of our own day' than Etty. Devotion to the undraped human form, new sight of *its* beauties, formed a leading and characteristic feature of his originality as an Artist. This tendency naturally carried him into the world of fable. For the actual world of our day,—or of any other, unless an Otaheitan,—does not move about without clothes. Yet the undraped human form is a reality too, clothed with significance by God himself. 'Dances of nymphs, 'in red and yellow shawls,'—though these treated as Etty treated them, have their perennial value also,—form but a portion of Etty's range of subject. It is a sample of an exaggerative, distorting spirit,—the implied assertion that they form the staple of his art. Subjects like *Judith*, like *Joan of Arc*, the *Sirens*, *Youth at the Prow*, the *Repentant Prodigal*, and many others, are not obsolete; are typical ones; representative, suggestive; of *universal* and perennial meaning: can be treated this year to as much purpose,—by the competent hand,—as in that. It is not because an incident happened a thousand years ago, or but in the past month, that it is fit for the Artist's purpose: but as possessing those noble attributes. And if the list of Etty's Works be examined, it will be found,—after deducting the subjects chosen, as I have said, as the text for exposition of the special range of beauty and meaning in Nature, he loved to translate upon canvas,—few painters have ever been less deceived

into the vulgar mistake of thinking an incident 'Historic,' because it happened, or was supposed to have happened, a certain number of years ago.

That Etty's Art had its faults and short-comings is a consequence involved in the fact that here was *Life*. It is the inane and mediocre who are faultless. The cuckoo cry, however, once prevalent as to his 'bad 'Drawing,' is one deserving little notice. Good drawing was not a mystery above Etty. Sometimes, it is true, he was negligent enough. He would commence, in his minor works, studying the Model from one point of view, would proceed at the next sitting from another; and ultimately forget to make the necessary modification of his previous work: the result being, of course, an incorrect whole, though the several parts had been faithfully copied from Nature. Oftener still, unfamiliarity (even among Artists), with the nude, and with the unusual appearances,—unusual on Canvas that is,—Nature will assume, has led to the notion Etty's drawing was at fault. There is indeed, amid the multitude of Etty's studies, sketches, minor pieces, plenty of careless drawing. The prevailing characteristic, however, of his Works is not bad drawing, but good. 'There was always a grand 'style about his outline,' maintains Mr. Frost, 'which 'was not understood by the uncultivated.' Even when most careless, more intelligence of form is implied than in the common-place precision of many a pattern draftsman of the French or German schools.

A passage bearing on this head in a review of Etty's Works, referred to in Mr. Leslie's Lecture, a good deal outraged the Professor; a statement, not meant to ex-

cuse bad drawing, but to account for the subordinate influence of Etty's drawing generally:—to the effect, that in Nature as in Art, Drawing and Colour are not attributes appearing in precisely equal degrees of *perfection* at once. The statement had better authority than the writer's own, viz., that of Mr. Ruskin,—a good observer, though an ill reasoner. The latter refers us to the glories of hue of a sunset sky;—of a leopard's and tiger's skin: of the peacock, and other birds; of shells, &c. True, as Mr. Leslie, misconceiving the statement, thinks it necessary to show,—true, in Nature herself often, in much of Raphael and the earlier Italians, in Titian's and Vandyck's heads, outline and colour may both be equally accurate, may both be of signal beauty. Yes! but one will triumph over the other. Wherever one manifests itself in the transcendent degree, arrests attention for its own sake, for its surpassing splendor, and abstract perfection: there, the other however correct, however beautiful, plays a subordinate part. Some effects of landscape are conceived (so to speak), in outline; some in colour or light and shadow: Raphael's figures, (quietly beautiful in colour too), in the former, Titian's, Giorgione's, (nobly drawn, also), in the latter. Is it of *Outline* we think, when the sun is setting, a mass of gleaming fire, and a thousand shapes of loveliness, (yet, in outline lovely also, if we examine), are grouped around:—roseate, orange, tender green?

Those who knew Etty 'only in his Works' often formed conclusions of the man sufficiently wide of the mark; accused him, as he says, of being a shocking

'and immoral man:' reasoning from the effect faithful renderings of nude form had on eyes unfamiliar to it, on their own unprepared, and so far, uneducated minds,—uneducated to discern the truer aspect and poetic meanings. Even those who had heard of the Painter as, 'after all, a decent kind of man,' made their own inferences, (reasoning still on the same false data), as to his mind: that it was 'a gross one;'—&c.

Admiration of Woman's form amounted in Etty to devotion. Belief in the purity of the nude when rendered in purity of heart, as in his own case,—with single-minded though impassioned worship of its beauties; was a religion with him: a religion innocent and true. And his faith, no half-and-half one, has opened for us a new chapter in Art. While in his worship of 'the female form in its fulness, beauty 'of form, exquisite rotundity,' painting pictures so exceptionable in the eyes of stiff-necked 'Propriety;' *he* thought but of his Art. 'Here all is consecrated 'to Art,'—an expression of his,—might fittingly have been inscribed over Etty's Studio.

It was, in fact, the very purity of his life,—a life singularly and uniformly continent,—and of his thoughts, the simplicity of his character, and the singleness of his aims, which enabled him to paint with a more fervid gusto of those beauties, than men of less intrinsic purity of character dare. *They* must resort to subterfuges, sophisticate, 'idealize,'—and what not.

'People may think me lascivious,' Etty would protest: 'but I have never painted with a lascivious motive.'

'If I had, I might have made great wealth.' The declaration to be found in his *Autobiography*, that 'if in 'any of my pictures an immoral sentiment has been 'aimed at, I consent it should be burnt,' had often before been made in private. None such has ever come to light; though everything from his hand has been raked into the market. Strange indeed, had the reverent poet in the days of undeserved poverty been tempted, for profit's sake, so to stultify his Art, so to degrade his glorious Colour and wondrous powers of rendering, (because of seeing), Nature. Once, late in life, when allowing a friend to make a selection from his 'Academy-Studies at a certain price, he made it a condition the purchaser should keep them as long as he lived.—'I don't want them,' he exclaimed, with some vehemence, 'in the possession of young men, merely to show 'about to one another. If *you* want them for 'such a purpose, you shall not have them! They 'were painted in privacy for my information and im-'provement: not to *those* ends.'

In ordinary matters so orthodox, unquestioningly accepting the conventions, respectable hearsays, and orthodoxies around him,—but throwing new life into them from his own enthusiastic heart,—he was here on the contrary, as incurably heterodox. The irresistible bent of his genius led him to break loose from the park palings of convention. Independently, and of his own will, he had early chosen his course. And till the end, he cleaved to it: despite urgent and unremitting remonstrances of friends. Clerical acquaintances 'take him to task;' express their 'dis-

'approbation.' Fair monitors tell him:—'You paint 'ladies *without* dresses, because you don't know *how* 'to dress them;' &c. The Painter took it all good humouredly enough; smiled, and kept on his way. 'Very peculiar and obstinate in some of his opinions,' they are fain to pronounce him: 'not caring what 'others said on a matter as to which he had once 'made up his mind,'—and as to which he felt himself in the right. The critics made still less impression on him, with their animadversions on his 'recklessness and bad taste,' his 'pernicious peculiarities,' the 'grossness of his imagination,' &c. For he in time came to be 'one of the best abused men in his profession.' And to the gross-minded, *he* seemed gross.

'I have done my best,'—was his answer in private, —'humble as it is, to raise the Arts of my country. 'And years hence it will be estimated.' He thought to elevate the general feeling as to the Nude; firmly believed it *would* alter: and also, in respect to himself and his own character. Alas! the 'Public' must see with *his* eyes first: with inspired, poetic eyes, not with dull, prurient ones.

Artists, and even gifted Artists, whose sympathies lie elsewhere, the bent of whose genius does *not* lead them to delight in study of the nude, stand in relation to Etty, as to this question, on little better footing than the general public. Constable,—himself an innovator, and discoverer, (of new phases of beauty), in Landscape,—Leslie, accomplished Master in a refined and subtile province of his own,—not to mention others of Etty's earlier compeers, frigid, mere Academic men, like Hilton and Howard,

or professional Portrait-painters, with common-place minds and worldly aims,—were of those solemnly to pronounce Etty 'too fond of the Nude!' They reckoned themselves wiser than he in his own domain; not as in the attitude of learners *there*, though themselves teachers from the same large Text of Nature, at another page. Such judgments argue they had *not* been taught by Etty's Art all it is capable of teaching; had not received its full message, nor seen its deeper meaning and value.

Even the Lecture of Mr. Leslie, otherwise appreciative, is disfigured by what from less honoured lips one would call hopeless blundering, on this head: criticism, in the 'Father of a Family' spirit, of Etty's 'rejection of draperies,' and 'peculiar treatment and 'choice of subject.' Much talk of 'real moral tendency' we have, enforced by second-hand (nay, thousandth hand), reference to the hackneyed 'Banishment of 'Poets,' by Plato, from his Model Republic: much dim misconception of the real spirit and tendency of Etty's Art,—in this aspect of it. While it is confessed,—what any ingenuous friend of Etty's must,—that *he* himself, rapt in his own world, went on thinking and meaning no ill; disparaging imputations,—disparaging to the whole scope and tenor of Etty's Life, for his achievements *were* his life,—are cast on the Works themselves and their influence on others.

'Etty's Art,' says the Lecturer in one place, 'was 'substantially rewarded, as well as appreciated. But 'I fear the extent to which he was patronised must 'not be entirely considered as proceeding from a pure,

'love and true appreciation of what is excellent in 'Painting;' &c.—A hasty inference on Mr. Leslie's part, unwarranted, I think, by a shadow of real proof. If this were indeed so,—if 'the voluptuous 'treatment of his subjects, in very many instances, 'recommended them more powerfully than their 'admirable Art,'—a fact, it seems, which 'cannot be 'doubted;'—how comes it that for twenty years of Etty's prime as an Artist, during which the treatment of his subject was to the full as 'voluptuous,' (if ever so), as afterwards, his Art was very *in*substantially rewarded: that for part of that time he could barely make a living by it? If this same 'voluptuous 'treatment' *were* so strong a recommendation to the investment of thousands of pounds in his Pictures, it is strange the recommendation was at one time,—during the greater part of his life that is,—scarce sufficient to obtain them purchasers at a few hundreds. The 'substantial reward' which Etty's Art ultimately secured we have seen to be the result simply of the last six or eight years of his career:—no inconsiderable portion of it, the fruit of such Pictures as the *Joan of Arc* and the *St. John*. Etty could always have sold *more* readily instead of less so, had he been less sparing of his draperies. Many a wealthy friend, having the fear of the respectable before his eyes, otherwise willing to have been a buyer, looked askance at his nymphs with unbound zones.

The assumption that Etty's treatment of the Nude *is* voluptuous, is itself a mistake. Inevitably, from the very perfection of his flesh-painting, the glory of *life* attained,—the good faith with which he rendered

what he saw,—his treatment may strike the superficial as voluptuous. It is glowing Nature he gives us: not modified as in Sculpture, by restricting imitation to one element,—Form,—nor transformed from itself by passing through the alembic of an alien mind; but sympathizingly and faithfully interpreted by a mind itself vivid and glowing. And Nature is no ascetic. But only for a very shallow glance does the voluptuousness exist. Where there is so much and so noble power legible, so much and various beauty, and no hint of evil meaning in the Painter, on the contrary, the manifest, over-mastering delight in his Art and in Nature, what room is there for abiding thought of anything but these attributes: except in the totally uncultivated, (by Art), or in the brutish or inane? The mind of every earnest student—as every genuine Artist can testify,—is, while painting from the Nude, preoccupied with his task, his endeavours, aims as an Artist. And so, in another way, is that of him who rightly reads the great Master's interpretation of it.

It is in quite different quarters young men seeking to edify themselves by the 'improper,' must look for it: and where draperies will by no means be discarded. They will have made a very bad bargain, who may have purchased a Picture, or Study, of Etty's, with such views. Even his Studies, which may have sometimes fallen into wrong hands,—for they address themselves only to those who can understand and learn from them, whether as Artist, or as Student and lover of Art and Nature,—will, in that case, little serve the ends of their possessors. The great and noble

in purpose and spirit refuses to lend itself to the ignoble. The dignity of the Art,—Art inspired by reverent insight into Nature,—removes the appeal to another Court. The nude forms of Etty are not nearly so alluring as, (to minds untinctured by Art), many a clever female 'head,' in meretricious style; such as fill the Dealers' and Printsellers' windows. The abstract glory of hue,—as any abstract characteristic carried very far, as in a stricter way, that of Form in Sculpture,—of itself precludes a voluptuous appeal. For Colour so far from being 'sensual,' as the conventional notion runs,—a blunder against which Mr. Ruskin is almost the only writer on Art, adequately to protest,—is in reality a spiritual and ennobling influence: one however, addressing itself, in its full eloquence, to relatively few.

Etty himself despised prudery on the subject of the Nude: with good reason. 'There is nothing 'indecent in my Pictures,' he was wont to insist,—'only in the vile notions people may bring with 'them, for which they are to be pitied:'—for these 'nasty ideas,' wherewith their 'nice minds' are furnished.—'Where no immoral sentiment is intended, 'I affirm that the simple, undisguised, naked figure 'is innocent. To the pure in heart, all things are 'pure.' In his *Autobiography*, as often in private, this life-long conviction of his is maintained. And 'there was no convincing him he was wrong,' murmur disconsolate friends. Probably not: for he was assuredly *right*.

I for one agree with Etty, that Nature's most beautiful work is not necessarily indecent: that where

no ill was in the Painter, there none is. These are, among what an old writer calls, 'offences taken, not 'given.' It is indubitable that the single-minded Etty felt nothing of what others complain; saw only beauty, where others impropriety. We are strangely his inferiors then, if we too, cannot catch sight of the skirts of the divine. Stupidity or baseness alone prevents a man seeing,—with Etty's help, what he saw and interpreted. We *are* indeed all stupid, more or less; of our ownselves dull and blunt of sense and perception: opaque substances partially luminous; some, more utterly impervious to the light than others. What men call genius is but the partial exception,—*bonâ-fide sight* of Nature, face to face, in one special direction: clear sight, which very few have in many directions; most, in none.

The current assumption that the human form is only capable of exciting one class of sensations; that Nature endowed it with so much grace and so much beauty, only to elicit *them*, none others: whether this or Etty's manner of thinking be the more ennobling, I leave it to the candid reader to determine. The reverse of honourable to Humanity surely, those notions; nay, singularly degrading: the true 'blas-'phemy against Nature,'—against God, in his works.

Out of this slough the true Painter of the Nude would raise us: above and beyond these misconceptions so derogatory. It is Art's noble province,—*one* of her divine messages,—the function of Art like Titian's, Etty's, the Sculpture of Antiquity, to teach us what the exigences of climate, convenience, custom, etiquette, otherwise prevent our learning:

to look with new and better-informed eyes. Happy, who as a youth has learned from them, that the human form is capable of inspiring other than prurient thoughts. Surely, it is a gain to be given nobler habits of feeling towards it, than those ignorance and obtuseness have at command. Even men, *not* of the strictest life and conversation, will scarcely lose, by learning to diversify, not to say elevate, the ideas they associate with it. The less accustomed we are to the human form, the more limited our sensations in respect to it, must remain. Condemn, banish its representation as 'indecent:' and indecent will be all thought of it. Familiarize our eyes with the same: a new and nobler range of ideas is restored to us. 'Accustom yourself,' teaches Goethe, 'to the free 'contemplation of Nature! She will always awaken 'serious reflections. And the beauty of Art will hallow 'the sentiments that arise from it.'

The 'notions of propriety' Etty's Pictures shock, are, it must be remembered, merely conventional. In departing from merely conventional propriety, he did no wrong. Art has a nobler morality. Conventional modesty is arbitrary: here means one thing, there another. In one nation, a woman's face becomes 'improper;'—in another, her eyes: strange degradation of the divine exponents of expression; but only *more* so than that implied by the notions current among ourselves, of the human *Form* divine, —which also, over and above its beauties of outline, light and shade, glories of Colour, and tone, has a language of sentiment and expression,—notions, as of something only to be covered up and to be ashamed of.

Gibbon, speaking of the ancient German women, and their chastity, attributes to clothes, effects, the reverse of those ordinarily assigned them: and with sound reason. Familiarity and strangeness do singularly modify people's feelings towards the Nude. 'What is one man's meat, is another's poison.' Habit renders us (here) insensible to ill, open only to elevating influences. Persons unfamiliar with Art, have been known to be 'shocked' by the Antique. The Americans, in their 'Great Exhibition,' added temporary draperies, where the Sculptor's supply had been insufficient. The authorities at Sydenham have also been compelled, by the sensitive delicacy of the Clergy, to manufacture a large supply of the 'usual leaf,' for the Antique. Such persons pique themselves on their purity of mind; talk of 'modern 'refinement,' &c. A veneer modesty it is, covering one knows not what: the fit attendant of a specious morality, hollow and dishonest. Are Clothes then the Palladium of morality? modesty and mere decorum convertible terms? morality itself an artificial habit, secured by the frail fence of etiquette; not a growth rooted in the conscience and the heart?

To the case of *such* interpreters of Nature, as compared with the happy-minded Etty, well does the lament of Milton apply, against

> * * 'guilty shame, dishonest shame
> Of Nature's works, honour dishonourable,
> Sin-bred:'

in place of purity, feeding us

> 'With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure.'

Notable it is, how well the show suffices. Sir Peter Lely never painted a 'Beauty,' which is not an intrinsically immodest picture. It is an immodest *soul*, —miserable sight,—which looks forth through the would-be languishing eyes. Yet no English lady refuses Lely admittance into her drawing-room. In Etty's case, the immodesty is not in the picture, but in the spectator's mind: *im*modesty, or often, on the ladies' part, cant, caught up from Society at large,—unconscious hypocrisy, perhaps; a spurious, factitious, suspiciously self-conscious modesty, the opposite of real modesty, which is unconscious,—and can take care of itself. That the contemplation of their *own* forms should be 'dangerous' to women is a singular circumstance. Let them rest assured, that as *they* are concerned, at all events, there is no harm in Etty's Pictures: in inspired portraiture of the female form, painted with reverent, almost devout delight and worship of Nature, of God in his works. As to the men, all depends on the eyes they being with them. They see 'what they bring with them the power of see-'ing.' The indecency, if it exist, is in their eyes and hearts. For which, surely, no Painter is responsible.

Etty's favourite and well-worn text, 'To the pure 'in heart all things are pure,' is not so uniformly applicable as its converse:—to the *im*pure all things are impure, to the profane all things profane. But the abuse argues not against the use. There are, indeed, eyes which are a desecration to whatsoever pure or beautiful they fall on. Not only the creation of a Titian or an Etty, but all poetic realities, lose by exposure to the eyes of some. But are *they* to be

consulted? Are we to renounce Art and its ennobling influences, because the thoughts of the multitude are evil? Are we to be guided in this matter by the sentiments of 'reformed' satyrs,—or *un*-reformed? of respectable fathers of families who have done 'sowing their wild oats?' There is a modern tendency afloat to bow to this authority, in Literature, in Art, and much else: a base, a dishonest, a slavish tendency. It is a characteristic feature of the 'organized hypocrisy,' which styles itself 'modern 'refinement,' that 'fast' young men' or fast old men, lewd livers and lewd talkers; men fresh, in fact, from impropriety of *conduct*, will, in 'mixed 'society,' fearlessly denounce the works of an Etty as 'improper: and think they are acquitting themselves of a public duty in so doing.

The cry, then, raised against Etty's works on the score of propriety, against his class of subject followed as he followed it, has its origin in most questionable sources: in obtuseness, insensibility, or mere ignorance on the one hand; in sham modesty, hypocrisy, or impurity of thought and the consciousness of it, on the other: a base and inane cry. Even they who christen such Art and such subject 'Sensual,'—thus disallowing in the human Form any higher appeal than a sensual one,—must be possessed by notions strangely confused: through the force of dogmas and *names;* or of system-mongering,—the love of theorizing about and about Art, and of elaborating their own fine-spun fancies.

In the boldness and thoroughness of Etty's devotion to Nude form lay his heterodoxy,—and his

power; a boldness born of love and conviction. He had faith in his convictions, in the glory he saw, in the singleness of his own intentions. Others, pursuing the same course of study, palter with the world, make a compromise with the prevailing inartistic notions, with the dominant cant: themselves (often) seeing no ill, yet confess it. Never will such hot and cold wooers of Nature be rewarded by the vitality and glow of inspiration attending Etty's hand. *Their* lukewarm love and little faith are requited by the frosty innocence and utter powerlessness to interest us, of their coldly proper creations: whether adorned with bits of impossible drapery, or unadorned. Every study of *his* bears the impress of belief. Believing in the high import of what he painted, his Works teach us something; teach *us* the beauty and significance of the feminine form. We see, (unless very dull), with his eyes; are endowed—for the while,—with something of his faculty. Some, indeed, accustomed to look on few but artificial objects, cannot, however helped, see the beauty of the Nude; think clothed figures 'more graceful,' &c.: a truly factitious taste.

As a young man, Etty had entered on the usual course of academic study from 'the Life,' which so many painters before and since, have entered on, and from which brought away so little. Not content with making it the means to an end,—good Drawing,—he threw into the study an intensity of purpose and a reality, unprecedented; and thus made it fruitful as it had never before been; made 'Academy studies' what academic studies had seldom or never been,—

works of Art, not mere school exercises: new readings of Nature's hand and of its meanings. *New* readings they are. For, not content with looking at Nature through the spectacles of the Antique,—much as he loved the latter,—he learned to paint what he saw: and as he saw it. To him, too, was open the whole rich domain of Colour; from which the Sculptors were self-banished.

He felt it to be his work, translation of this particular leaf in the 'open Book:' the task for which his genius, (insight), fitted him. He had a great contempt for devoting the resources of Art to portraying the niceties of a silk stocking or shoe-buckle. The skilful rendering of the crease in said stocking or of the pink flesh shining through, seemed to him about as contemptible an achievement as a man could set himself. With his love and apprehension of the 'unsophisticated human form,'—no laughable 'forked radish' merely, to him, a poet and a painter,—it is not strange he 'preferred painting' from *it*, 'the glorious work of God,' to imitating the 'productions of the loom,' and of the needle. Draperies, with their manifold capacities of grace, their flowing lines and contrasted curves,—or, assuming a higher form, as the ever-varying 'echo of 'Form,' and as the exponent of sentiment, of expression,—the function it performs for Raphael, and the earlier Italians, for Stothard in a later time,—it was not for him to paint: not for him, but for those who naturally sympathize with and understand their beauties; whose gift lies that way, in short. Each man to his task.

And thus,—to speak to the 'question of Taste,'—

what Mr. Leslie calls Etty's 'indiscriminate partiality,'—his 'extraordinary predilection,' for the Nude, was *not* 'based on a mistake:' but on the contrary of a mistake. His preference was right for himself; would have been erroneous enough, laid down as the rule for all painters. 'Artificial objects' *may* be as poetic as 'natural ones,' (as Mr. Leslie implies),—if not intrinsically discordant with Nature's laws of beauty and fitness; and if rendered under the effects of Nature, and as the means to higher ends, —expressing sentiment and meaning on the painter's part. Reynolds's plea for even 'coat and wig,' that 'these things have all light and shadow,' only applies to those who *do* 'know how to look' for Nature's part in man's work. But this knowledge or tendency cannot be acquired; must be born with a man. It would have been as idle waste and thwarting of natural leanings, to have set Etty the task, as it would have been to have sentenced Mr. Leslie to the Life-School. And the nude form, in addition to beauties which coat and wig have not, is *also* susceptible of 'light and shadow,' and of Nature's other and varying modifications.—A man who could paint such eloquent flesh and blood, might well be indisposed to sacrifice it at the shrine of draperies, more or less monotonous: even in the hope of increasing 'the grace and dignity of 'his figures.' There are many instances in Etty's works, wherein the mere expression or sentiment of the figure,—as in the prone Hero on Leander's body, in Studies such as the *Forsaken*, &c.,—could hardly be in a nobler key.

We must not forget that figures draped, or undraped, may be dissimilar means to similar ends: or, two Artists'.ends may be different; and both, acceptable. One is inspired by the glory of one phase of Nature. Another ignoring that, calls our attention to *his* chosen point of view. And as I have said, every Artist out of his province stands in the position of learner,—one to another. Where his gift fails him: there, he has to be taught. Hogarth might teach Etty to understand the living crowd: Etty, Hogarth the beauty of a living form. Each would prove a bad scholar to the other, I fear. For the great Artist, is in general, necessarily, from the very intensity of apprehension and sensation which makes him one, a Sectarian.

APPENDIX.

LIST OF ETTY'S EXHIBITED PICTURES.

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft.	in.	Width. Ft.	in.
1811.	Sappho	Brit. Inst.	2	11	2	6
	Telemachus rescues the Princess Antiope from the Fury of the Wild Boar	R. Acad.				
1812.	Cupid stealing the Ring	Brit. Inst.	3	0	2	7
	A Domestic Scene	R. Acad.				
	A Portrait	——				
1813.	Courtship	Brit. Inst.	1	3	1	5
	The Indian Warrior	R. Acad.				
	The Fire-side	——				
	The Whisper of Love	——				
1814.	Priam supplicating Achilles for the Dead Body of his Son Hector	——				
1815.	A Study	——				
	Psyche	——	2	0	1	7
	Portraits of a Family	——				
1816.	Contemplation	Brit. Inst.	3	2	2	10
	The Discovery of an Unpleasant Secret.	——	2	0	2	5
	The Offering of the Magi	——	3	2	2	9
	Portrait of a Lady	R. Acad.				
	A Study	——				
1817.	Bacchanalians: a Sketch	——	1	5	2	0
	Cupid and Euphrosyne	——	3	7	3	0
1818.	Head of a Warrior	Brit. Inst.	2	7	2	1
	The Blue Beetle: Portraits	R. Acad.				
	Portrait of the Rev. Wm. Jay (of Bath).	——				
	Ajax Telamon	——				
	A Study	——				
1819.	Manlius Hurled from the Rock	Brit. Inst.	5	1	4	2
	Genii of the Spring: Morning	R. Acad.				
	Portraits of a Child and Favourite Dog.	——				
	Penitence: a Sketch	——				
	Portrait of Miss Jay	——				
	Portrait of a Gentleman	——				
1820.	Pandora formed by Vulcan and crowned by the Seasons: a Sketch from Hesiod	Brit. Inst.	1	5	1	10
	Hercules killing the Man of Calydo with a Blow of his Fist	——	5	0	4	3
	Magdalen: a Sketch	——	1	4	1	9
	The Coral-finders: Venus and her Youthful Satellites arriving at the Isle of Paphos	R. Acad.				
	Drunken Barnaby	——				

'Mihi mirus affuit status.
'A duobus suum portatus.'
Barnabæ Itinerarium.

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. in.	Width. Ft. in.
1820.	Portrait of Miss Wallace	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1821.	Cupid and Psyche	Brit. Inst.	... 1 9	... 1 10
	'Where far above, in spangled sheen, 'Celestial Cupid Venus' fam'd son, advanc'd, 'Held his dear Psyche.'—			
	Cleopatra's Arrival in Cilicia	R. Acad.		
1822.	Young St. Catherine: a Study	Brit. Inst.	... 2 0	... 1 9
	Sketch from one of Gray's Odes	——	... 1 9	... 1 6
	'Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows, 'While smoothly riding o'er the azure realm 'In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes; 'Youth at the Prow, and Pleasure at the Helm.'			
	Venus and Cupid (Descending)	——	... 3 0	... 2 5
	Cupid and Psyche (Descending)	——	... 3 0	... 2 5
	Cupid Sheltering his Darling from the Approaching Storm	R. Acad.	.... 2 0	... 1 5
	Maternal Affection	——	... 3 6	... 3 5
	Venus at the Bath: a Sketch. (Cupid and Psyche introduced.)	Brit. Inst., in 1825.	... 0 10	... 0 9
1823.	Study of a Little Girl	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1824.	Pandora, the Heathen Eve, having been formed by Vulcan as a Statue, and animated by the Gods; is crowned by the Seasons	R. Acad.	... 4 0	... 4 9
	'To deck her brows, the fair-tress'd Seasons bring A Garland breathing all the sweets of Spring.' *Elton's Hesiod.*			
1825.	Nymph and Cupid: a finished Sketch	Brit. Inst.	... 2 2	... 1 9
	The Combat: Woman Pleading for the Vanquished. An Ideal Group	R. Acad.	... 10 4	... 13 3
	Portrait of Etty	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1826.	The Choice of Paris	R. Acad.	... 7 9	... 10 9
1827.	Head of a Jew	Brit. Inst.	... 2 6	... 2 2
	Judith and Holofernes	R. Acad.	... 11 10	... 15 0
	'Then she came to the pillar of the Bed, ** 'and took down his falchion from thence.'			
	'Twas in the happy Olden Time, 'Before the birth of Care or Crime.'	——		
	The Parting of Hero and Leander	——		
1828.	'Venus now wakes, and wakens Love' ... *Milton's Comus.*	Brit. Inst.	... 2 5	... 2 8
	Cupid Intercedes for Psyche	——	... 2 1	... 2 7
	Guardian Cherubs: in which are introduced resemblances of the Lady Mary Agar, and Hon. C. W. Herbert Agar, infant children of the Earl of Normanton	R. Acad.		
	A Composition taken from the Eleventh Book of Paradise Lost. (Bevy of Fair Women.)	——		
	Venus, the Evening Star			
	Sketch for the (*second*) Judgment of Paris	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1829.	A Subject from Ovid's Metamorphoses	Brit. Inst.	... 3 11	... 3 11
	Benaiah, one of David's Chief Captains.. 'He slew two Lion-like men of Moab.'	R. Acad.	... 12 0	... 14 0
	Hero having thrown herself from the Tower, at the sight of Leander drowned; dies on his Body	——		

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. in.	Width. Ft. in.
1830.	Venus and Cupid (Descending)	Brit. Inst.	... 1 10	... 2 4
	The Storm	R. Acad.	... 4 0	... 4 6
	'They cried unto Thee, and were deliver-'ed; they trusted in Thee, and were not 'confounded.'			
	Judith	—		
	'And, anon after, she went forth and gave 'Holofernes' head to her maid: and she put 'it in her bag of meat.'			
	Candaules, King of Lydia, showing his Wife by stealth to Gyges, one of his Ministers: as she goes to bed.—*Herodotus*	—		
	The Dancer	—		
	Study for Sabrina	Soc. Arts, in 1819.		
	Nymph Reposing	—		
	Guardian Genii	—		
1831.	Sketch of a Subject for an Altar-piece. Martyrdom of some of the Early Christians	Brit. Inst.	... 2 9	... 1 10
	The Maid of Judith waiting outside the Tent of Holofornes	R. Acad.		
	Nymph Angling	—		
	Window in Venice during a Festa	—	... 2 9	... 2 3
	Sabrina	—	... 2 8	... 3 1
	The Shipwrecked Mariner. (Robinson Crusoe.)	—		
1832.	Youth at the Prow, and Pleasure at the Helm	—	... 5 0	... 6 3
	The Destroying Angels and Demons of Evil interrupting the Orgies of the Vicious and Intemperate. A finished Sketch	—	... 3 10	... 3 0
	Phædria and Cymochles; or the Idle Lake	—		
1833.	The Dangerous Playmate	Brit. Inst.	... 1 9	... 1
	Britomart redeemes faire Amoret	R. Acad.		
	The Lute-Player	—	... 2 6	... 2
	Head of a Philosopher: a Sketch. (Portrait.)	—		
	Hylas and the Nymphs	—	... 3 10	... 4 4
1834.	The Persian	Brit. Inst.	... 1 11	... 1 7
	Gathering Flowers	—	... 1 8	... 1 4
	A Sketch made for the Sacred Annual... 'As Mary weeping by the tomb remain'd, * * * * * 'back she turn'd her eye of tears: 'And there stood Jesus.' *Montgomery's Messiah.*	—	... 2 0	... 2 10
	A Portrait	R. Acad.		
	The Cardinal	—	... 3 3	... 2 9
1835.	The Lute-Player. (Repetition of the Picture painted in 1833.)	Brit. Inst.	... 2 6	... 2 9
	Nymph and Young Faun Dancing	—	... 3 0	... 2 6
	Preparing for a Fancy-dress Ball	R. Acad.		
	Study of the Head of a Youth	—		
	Venus and her Satellites, (or 'Venus attired by the Graces')	—		
	'There, Beauty's lovely Goddess smiles to wield 'The brandish'd might of Mars's solid shield. 'Loose flow her tresses, heightening every charm.'			

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. in.	Width. Ft. in.
1835.	Study from a Young Lady: (a 'York Beauty.')	R. Acad.		
	The Bridge of Sighs, Venice	——	... 3 5	... 2 6
	The Warrior Arming. ('Godfrey de Bouillon.')	——		
	Phædria and Cymochles on the Idle Lake	——		
	'And all the way the wanton Damsel found 'New Mirth, her passenger to entertaine.'			
	Wood-Nymphs sleeping: Satyr bringing Flowers.—Morning	——		
	A Magdalen (Kneeling.)	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1836.	The Prodigal Son	Brit. Inst.	... 3 1	... 2 7
	A Family of the Forests	R. Acad.		
	Psyche lays the Casket at Venus's feet: Cupid pleads in her behalf	——		
	Venus and her Doves	——		
	Adam and Eve at their Morning Orisons.	York.		
	Mars, Venus, and Cupid	——		
1837.	Samson betrayed by Delilah	R. Acad.		
	The Sirens and Ulysses	——		
1838.	The Good Samaritan	Brit. Inst.		
	A Bivouac of Cupid and his Company	R. Acad.		
	The Prodigal Son	——		
	'I will arise and go to my father.'			
	A Bacchante and Boy Dancing	——		
	Il Duetto	——		
	Miss Lewis in character of a Flower-girl	——		
	The Converted Jew	——		
	Somnolency	——		
1839.	Waters of Elle	Brit. Inst.	... 2 11	... 2 11
	'Love's cherish'd gift, the rose he gave is faded: 'Love's blighted flower can never bloom again. 'Weep for thy fault, in mind, in heart degraded.'			
	Diana and Endymion	R. Acad.		
	Pluto carrying off Proserpine	——		
	The Lady Mayoress of York	——		
1840.	'Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er'	Brit. Inst.	... 3 2	... 3 2
	Group of Children	——	... 1 4	... 1 6
	The Little Mariner. (Girl in a Nautilus Sbell.)	——	... 1 5	... 1 9
	Andromeda:—Perseus coming to her Rescue	R. Acad.		
	Mars, Venus; and Attendant disrobing her Mistress for the Bath	——		
	A Subject from the Parable of the Ten Virgins	——	... 8 1	... 6 7
	Sabrina	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	Study of a Dog	——		
	Three Portraits. (Children of Henry Wood, Esq.)	——		
	The Jewess. (Small *Head.*)	——		
	The Wrestlers	——		
	'Angels ever bright and fair'	——		
1841.	Head of a Mahomedan	Brit. Inst.	... 1 5	... 1 3
	Group:—Morning	R. Acad.		

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. in.	Width. Ft. in.
1841.	The Repentant Prodigal's Return to his Father and Home	R. Acad.		
	To Arms, to Arms, ye Brave!	—		
	Still Life	—		
	Female Bathers surprised by a Swan	—	... 4 3	... 4 3
	David. (At his Harp.)	—		
	'Awake, my glory; awake lute and harp; 'Myself will awake right early.'			
	Morning Amusements	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1842.	The Little Brunette	Brit. Inst.	... 2 4	... 2 0
	A Magdalen	—		
	Two of the Modern Time. (Lady and Lapdog.)	—		
	One of the Olden Time. (A Warrior.)	—	... 3 9	... 3 4
	The Dance. From Homer's Description of Achilles' Shield	—		
	The Innocent are Gay	—		
	Venus and Cupid	Soc. Arts. in 1849.		
	Study of Paris. (Head.)	—		
	A Magdalen. (Recumbent figure, reading.)	—		
	Cupid and Psyche. (Psyche sleeping: Cupid bending over her.)	—		
	The Mourner. (Semi-nude figure.)	—		
	The Tired Wayfarer	—		
1843.	On the Thames. (Chelsea.)	Brit. Inst.	... 2 5	... 2 11
	Bathers	—	... 2 11	... 2 5
	Sketch for a large Picture of Christ Blessing Little Children.—A subject intended originally for St. Margaret's Church, Brighton	—	... 2 6	... 3 9
	Dead Game	—	... 2 1	... 2 3
	Head of Judas	—	... 1 8	... 1 5
	Fruit	—	... 1 3	... 1 7
	The Graces:—Psyche and Cupid as the Personification of Love	R. Acad.		
	The Bather	—		
	'At the doubtful breeze alarmed.'			
	The Entombment of Christ	—		
	In the Greenwood Shade	—		
	Still Life	—		
	Flemish Courtship	—		
	The Infant Moses and his Mother	—		
	Cupid scattering Roses	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	Venus and Cupid	—		
	Landscape.—View of the Stid, Bolton Abbey	—		
	A Water Nymph. (Recumbent figure.)	—		
	Nymph robbing Cupid of his Bow	—		
	Cupid interceding for Psyche	—		
	Repose. (Recumbent female figure.)	—		
	Venus and Cupid	—		
	Study	—		
1844.	Study of a Head. (Afterwards entitled 'The Saviour.')	Brit. Inst.	... 2 1	... 1 9
	Sleeping Nymphs and Satyr	—	... 2 5	... 3 3
	The Backbiter	R. Acad.		

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. In.	Width. Ft. In.
1844.	'Live while you live, the epicure will say, 'And seize the pleasure of the fleeting day: 'Live while you live, the Christian preacher cries, 'And give to God each moment as it flies. 'Lord, in my views may both united be: 'I live in pleasure while I live to Thee!'	R. Acad.		
	The Cardinal	—		
	A Subject from Comus.—Painted the size of the intended Fresco 'All amidst the gardens fair 'Of Hesperus and his daughters three, 'That sing about the golden tree.'	—		
	'Tis but a Fancy Sketch	—		
	Eve at the Fountain	—		
	Cupid in a Shell	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	Study of Colour. (Female Head.)	—		
	Ariadne. (Reclining female figure.)	—		
	Head of a Jew	—		
	Contemplation	—		
	Fair Rosamond	—		
	A Naiad	—		
	Repose after Bathing. (Nude sitting figure.)	—		
	The Bather	—		
	The Signal; or, 'Hero and Leander.' (Nude reclining figure.)			
	Grecian Warrior	—		
1845.	Cupid looking after the Gold-Fish. (Venus standing by, with Psyche.)	Brit. Inst.	... 1 8	... 1 11
	The Forsaken	—	... 3 2	... 2 9
	Ablution	—	... 3 2	... 2 9
	Aurora and Zephyr	R. Acad.		
	The Indian Alarmed	—		
	Study of the Head of a Little Boy	—		
	Cupid interceding with his Mother for Psyche	—		
	Flower-girl	—		
	A Votive Offering	—		
	'Or, like a nymph, with bright and flowing hair,	—		
	'Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen.'	—		
	Meditation	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	Study of a Head	—		
	Portrait of Matilda, daughter of E. Bicknell, Esq.	—		
	The Bather	—		
	Portrait of a Little Girl	—		
	A Magdalen	—		
	A Rabbi	—		
1846.	A Pirate carrying off a Captive	Brit. Inst.	... 3 1	... 2 6
	Children reposing after Bathing	—	... 2 7	... 2 3
	A Bather 'At the doubtful breeze alarmed.'	—	... 2 11	... 2 5
	The Grape-Gatherer	R. Acad.		
	Composition, from Milton's Comus 'Circe, with the Sirens three, 'Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades.'	—		

Year.	TITLE.	Where (first) Exhibited.	Size. Height. Ft. in.	Width. Ft. in.
1816.	The Choice of Paris	R. Acad.		
	The Juvenile Scribe	——		
	The Sea-Bather	——		
	Still Life	——		
	Head of a Jew	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	'He was despised and rejected of men'..	——		
	A French Peasant	——		
	The Fairy of the Fountain	——		
1817.	An Israelite indeed	Brit. Inst.	... 2 9	. 2 3
	A Magdalen Reading	——	... 3 1	... 2 7
	Reposing after Bathing	——	... 2 5	... 3 3
	Joan of Arc: on finding the Sword she had dreamt of; in the Church of St. Catherine de Fierbois; devotes herself and it to the service of God and her Country	R. Acad.		
	—— makes a Sortie from the Gates of Orleans, and scatters the Enemies of France	——		
	—— after rendering the most signal services to her Prince and People, is suffered to die a Martyr in their cause	——		
	Charites et Gratiæ	——		
	Portrait of Master Wethered	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
1818.	Morning Prayers	R. Acad.		
	A Study, in Colour, of Objects of Still Life	——		
	La Fleur de Lis	——		
	A Sketch of Landscape: Givendale, Yorkshire	——		
	A Group of Captives. 'By the Waters of Babylon'	——		
	Aaron, the High Priest of Israel	——		
	Him that crieth from the Wilderness, Repent ye!	——		
	Nymph after Bathing. (Reclining figure.)	Soc. Arts, in 1849.		
	(Finished) Sketch for Youth at the Helm and Pleasure at the Prow	——		
1819.	Amoret Chained. *Painted in a previous year*	R. Acad.		
	The Crochet-Worker	——		
	'Gather the Rose of Love while yet 't is time'	——		
	Three Versions of One Subject. (Portrait of a Lady:—full face and in profile.) *Painted in a previous year*	——		

A Catalogue even approximately complete of *all* Etty's various productions:—composition, group, and single figure; sketch and study; Portrait, Landscape, Still Life;—would prove an arduous, not to say impossible, task. Difficulties, scarcely superable, are presented by their multitude, and, in nine cases out of ten, their ineradicable character,—of (more

or less literal) Studies from Nature: precluding the possibility of a specific or distinctive title. These difficulties are not lessened by their being widely scattered among hands constantly changing; nor by the fact, that Etty kept no continuous register of his doings,—nothing pretending to it. Their very number, it is, for similar reasons, hard to compute.

In addition to the *exhibited* works, must be remembered the *Diploma Picture* of 1828, the two *Frescos* of 1843 and 1844; various sketches for the same:—sketches, studies, variations of *all* his important works. Such sketches and studies were often finished at a subsequent date, and themselves worked up into Pictures:—chiefly during the last fifteen years of his life, when every fragment from his hand came to be in demand. Add, also, not less than fifty or sixty *Portraits:* many of them fine samples of his Art; all bearing unmistakable traces of his hand.

Two hundred and forty-six Pictures, the imperfect List already given, itself comprises: whereof, one-half are *Compositions* of importance, executed in the maturity of his power. Almost as many again,—certainly, half as many,—to judge from such data as lie before me,—desultory entries and casual hints,—must have been produced: smaller works, minor flights of Fancy, Sketches; and, a still larger class, referable more or less directly, to the general head of 'Study:'—Landscape, Still-Life, 'Head,' or imaginatively worked-up reading from the *Life.*

Again, the Sale, after Etty's death, of the remaining contents of his Studio, included above eight hundred *Academy-Studies,* samples from almost every period of his industrious career: some six hundred and fifty mill-boards that is, (oil studies), whereof nearly or quite a hundred were covered on both sides; about fifty chalk sketches from 'the Life;' about fifty 'slight oil sketches' from the same. Perhaps a quarter of the whole contained two or more figures.

As to the number of Academy-Studies dispersed during Etty's life, it is easier to hazard an inference than to verify it: undoubtedly, several hundred.

Unfinished pictures, upwards of thirty, he left behind: of

which the *Eurydice*, and some half dozen studies in the style of the *Crochet-Worker*, were the most important.

Upwards of sixty *Copies* after the Old Masters were dispersed at the Sale. To which, add twenty or more previously distributed among his Family, or sold before his death.

Not much under two thousand Canvases (and panels), and Mill-boards, we are thus justified in inferring to contain evidence of B[illegible]y's hand, of varying scope and extent. He was not so far wrong, it would seem, in the conjecture, that *if* assembled, his entire works would 'almost fill Westminster 'Hall.'

THE END.

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